Interview with Eileen Roberta Donovan

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Women Ambassadors Series

EILEEN ROBERTA DONOVAN

Interviewed by: Ann Miller Morin

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Q: Ambassador Donovan would you tell me a little bit about your family, where you were born and spent your early years, that sort of thing?

DONOVAN: I'm an old Bostonian, Mrs. Morin. I was born in Boston in a suburb called Jamaica Plain, which was nice then. There I grew up and went to school. I went to the famous Girls' Latin School, which is now the Boston Latin Academy, and then went on to what was then the Boston Teachers' College.

Q: Was that also a Catholic school, Boston Teachers'?

DONOVAN: No. Neither was the Girls' Latin School.

Q: Oh, I thought it was.

DONOVAN: Oh, no. No, no, it's one of the oldest public schools ithe country.

Q: It's very, very fine.

DONOVAN: It's excellent. It was, I don't know if it still is. But I guess it is. After all the ruckus they had in Boston about minorities and all that, they changed it into a coeducational school. So now they have the Boston Latin School, which is the old Boys' edition, and the Boston Latin Academy also.

Q: You mentioned a brother to me, did you have any other siblings?

DONOVAN: No, my only sibling was my brother, Bill, who was 18 months younger than I. We grew up together in a very happy family of middle income but high ideals, and, I shouldn't say this, but in high intelligence also.

Q: Well naturally. [Laughter] Your parents, what generation American were they, if we can put it that way? Somebody came from Ireland.

DONOVAN: Yes, but it was a long time back. My mother's family were descendants of John Barry, the first commodore of the U.S. Navy. When I didn't quite believe that—I thought it was some genealogical hocus-pocus - at some point, after my uncle had done a fairly good checking out, I checked myself and read a book about John Barry and found that he'd never married, so it must have been a bar sinister relationship. But then I found out that after the Revolutionary War he came to this country, bringing his nine younger brothers and sisters, and they all settled in Boston, New York, Philadelphia. I think the direct descendancy is from one of those who was legitimate. [Laughter] So that was a long time ago.

My father's family came over, I don't know when, but sometime well before the Civil War, because we had a little daguerreotype, one of the earliest ones, of his mother and father standing in front of a little house with a picket fence, and the address of the house was on the daguerreotype. It was 80 Federal Street, Boston, which is now, I think, the address of the Chamber of Commerce or something. Anyway it was all burned down, burned down to pieces, shortly after the Civil War. Then my father's family moved out to Jamaica Plain.

My mother's family lived in Lynn and Salem, Massachusetts. She worked in Boston, where they met. So it's kind of a long time back.

Q: I should say.

DONOVAN: My mother's... the hackles on her back used to rise slightly when people would mention, “You don't have a brogue, you pretty little Irish lady.” (Laughter) She resented that very much.

Q: Was her maiden name Barry?

DONOVAN: Her maiden name was Barry.

Q: So was my grandmother's.

DONOVAN: Oh really?

Q: It was a traditional home with your father working and Mamstaying home taking care of the children?

DONOVAN: That's right. She stayed at home until the war came. That's World War II. Then she started out with a typewriter and volunteered as a volunteer worker in what was very secret in those days. It was a place where they plotted plane departures and arrivals, enemy planes that were coming in. So she did that work. She was just too old to join the WAC, which she would have done, but she 46 or 7 or something, and just too old. After that she never went back to the home, so to speak. She had a job, she worked for the Sunbeam Corporation, the toaster people I call them, as an accountant and office manager, and had several other jobs until she retired in 1955, was it? Just about that time. A little earlier she came to visit me in Milan when she retired.

Q: What sort of work had your father done?

DONOVAN: My father was a district chief in the Boston FirDepartment.

Q: Oh, really?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: Were you raised in the Catholic Church?

DONOVAN: Yes. I went to a Catholic elementary school, because it was nearer than the public school, and you could walk without crossing the street.

Q: Very important, very important.

DONOVAN: But after that I never had any religious education.

Q: But you observed all the holidays. Did you do Easter duty anthat type of thing?

DONOVAN: Oh yes, I was a very good Catholic. It's a lot easier now.

Q: Yes, I'm sure it is. Were your parents—did they expect you to grow up and have a career? Was that your feeling as you grew up, that you were expected to?

DONOVAN: They didn't mention the word “career.” That's sort of a relatively new word, but they expected me to go to college and then to choose what I wanted to do. I suppose that's the same thing as saying a career.

Q: Just using a different word.

DONOVAN: However, my father was very much - are we on again now? Q: Yes.

DONOVAN: Very much in favor of my becoming a schoolteacher. In those days there weren't as many opportunities as there are now. So I went to the Boston Teachers' College and got a bachelor's degree and then I went back...

Q: That was coed, wasn't it?

DONOVAN: There were a few men, yes.

Q: But mostly women?

DONOVAN: At graduate level. It was men at graduate level. I went back a fifth year and got my master's degree. Then I taught school, which I enjoyed doing. I'm glad I wasn't stuck with it for the rest of my life, but I enjoyed doing it very much while I did it.

Q: What were you teaching? A regular grade?

DONOVAN: I was teaching history and English at the beginning, juniohigh schools and then in high schools in Boston.

Q: What were your favorite subjects when you were in school?

DONOVAN: English and history, I think.

Q: Good training for a diplomat. English and history.

DONOVAN: Yes, especially at that Girls' Latin School, which was a tough, tough school. I never was very good at math, but I learned a lot of things there, which I don't think they ever taught in other high schools in those days. Something they call pr#cis writing, in which you would take the heart of the matter, that is, there'd be five or six pages of concentrated stuff, and you would reduce it to one paragraph. Well, you know I've been doing that all the rest of my life, trying to read through acres and acres of junk and pulling out the important part of it, if there was any.

Q: It's interesting how these seeds are laid down early.

DONOVAN: Yes, so that was a tough school.

Q: How many years was that, that Girls' Latin?

DONOVAN: There was a six-year course and a four-year course. I was in the four-year course. Everything was required. You had no choices: English and history and four years of Latin and four years of math, which was the bane of my life because I had never learned the multiplication tables properly. We had algebra one year, and advanced algebra and geometry the next year, and advanced algebra and trigonometry the third year, and some other variety of calculus the fourth year. So I never did very well on that because I was always making mistakes subtracting two from four. But everything else was fine and it was good, tough training so that when I got into college it was a breeze.

Q: Was this a competitive school? Did you have to take tests to geinto it?

DONOVAN: I think so. I don't remember exactly, but it was a school in the center of the... it was a school to which girls came from all parts of Boston.

Q: Yes. You commuted, I suppose?

DONOVAN: Yes, and on the Boston subway system. Jamaica Plain High was the school that all my friends at home went to, but I didn't go there.

Q: Now how did that make you feel, not going to the school wheryour friends went?

DONOVAN: I soon made other friends in the new school. They didn't have to be just neighbor friends. That was good training for what happened later on, although of course I didn't know it at the time. But I enjoyed all that. There was a marvelous teacher there that introduced me to the beauties of modern poetry, which has always been an interest of mine for the rest of my life. So it was all for the best, although it was tough, by which I should have said “difficult.”

Q: Yes, I know it certainly has that reputation of being an excellent school. What sort of thing did you like to do outside of school?

DONOVAN: Mostly I studied, which was too bad for a little girl about 14. However, I didn't study all the time and we always went to the beach in the summer. My mother felt that the sun and the sea were very important, so we went to different places, Hammer Rock and North Scituate and places like that. I played tennis in a bungling way because I've never been good at athletics, really. I swam like mad, which I was good at. I got all beautifully tanned and sunned in the summer in order to go back and become a slave in the Girls' Latin School. [Laughter]

Q: Build up your energy. When you were little did you used to plawith your brother a lot?

DONOVAN: Oh, yes.

Q: Boys' games?

DONOVAN: I don't know if they were boys' games. I remember chasinhim a lot; is that a boys' game? [Laughter]

Q: I don't know. What I'm getting at is, did you like to play witdolls or were you sort of a tomboy?

DONOVAN: I wasn't a tomboy, but I never had a great affection fodolls.

Q: Do you like to read?

DONOVAN: Oh, yes, that was my real... I had a wonderful soldier bodoll named Will that I kept with me.

Q: Ah, early interest in soldiers, I mean to say in the military.

DONOVAN: I don't think so. I think that's a little far-fetched.

Q: That's far-fetched, okay. Did you have grandparents and youaunts and your uncles around you to have big family get-togethers?

DONOVAN: Yes, my mother's mother died when she was about seven and her father when she was fourteen, and she had many brothers and sisters but they were all spread out pretty much. My father's family lived very nearby and we were all friends.

Q: So you had the feeling of being part of a warm loving group?

DONOVAN: Oh, yes.

Q: Now you've mentioned that you had a loving family, was youfather the typical authoritarian figure to you?

DONOVAN: No, he wasn't at all. He was just the opposite. He was sweet, easy-going, kind, hardworking...

Q: Mama ruled the roost, did she?

DONOVAN: No, she didn't, but she was more active, if you know what mean.

Q: A bundle of energy?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: How about yourself, did you have a lot of energy?

DONOVAN: Yes, I had plenty of it in those days. I wish I had abouone-tenth of it now.

Q: Just one more thing, did you join Girl Scouts of 4-H or thinglike that?

DONOVAN: Yes, I was a Girl Scout. I had trouble with the knots.

Q: Oh, yes. How did you do with the signaling?

DONOVAN: I don't think I ever got that far. I never got beyond... I was always a beginner at scouting. A perennial beginner, the way I was at tennis. [Laughter]

Q: What about your teachers, any special teacher that had a biimpact on you?

DONOVAN: Yes, there were. I don't know how important they are in this picture now, it's so long ago. There was a Miss Janet Crawford who is the one who introduced me to literature really, opened up wide new circles, that stayed with me for a long time. I had some good teachers in history and other subjects, but I don't know of anyone, I can't think of anyone in particular that was of lasting importance on my life.

Q: Just a teacher-child relationship. Did you have a school paper?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: And did you write for that?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: You did? You wrote for the school paper?

DONOVAN: It was called the Jabberwock, taken from you know where.

Q: Yes indeed. You were just a news reporter?

DONOVAN: I was just a contributor to that. I was some big shot in the yearbook in college. I don't remember what. I don't remember whether I was editor or something like that.

Q: Good. You've always had an interest in writing and in literature. That comes through all the way along the line. Now, let's zip along here...

DONOVAN: We've got to zip if we're going to be finished by the enof the day.

Q: You got your master's, and then, around 1943, was it?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: You had taught and then you went to join the armed forces.

DONOVAN: That's right.

Q: And you joined the U.S. Army.

DONOVAN: That's right.

Q: Yes. As a private?

DONOVAN: As a less than a private.

Q: Less than a private?

DONOVAN: Yes. I don't know what they called it.

Q: What could be less than a private?

DONOVAN: I don't know, but it was something less than a private. You only got promoted to be a private after you were in. At the beginning it was called a WAAC, the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, and it took... I'd been in six months, I guess, before it became part of the Army of the United States, and then it became the WAC. I went to Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, with a bunch of recruits from Boston, one cold February night, sleeping three in a bunk, on a train from the South Station when it was about eight below zero. I trained at

Fort Oglethorpe, basic training, and somehow by the next May I was selected as one of those to go to Officer Candidate School at Fort Des Moines, which I did. I came out as a second lieutenant from there.

Q: So that would make it 1944 [when] you became a second lieutenant?

DONOVAN: Yes, I think so, yes. Then you know the old school teacher, they said “Ah-hah, she shall teach.” So I taught at Fort Oglethorpe for a while in such exotic courses as military customs and courtesies and articles of war and things like that.

Q: Teaching other women?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: You were kept pretty segregated from the men, were you?

DONOVAN: In those days in those training camps, yes. There was no what do you call it? We were separate. Then they found that there was a fall in recruiting and so they sent me back to New England to recruit more women to fill up their army. So I opened an office out in Springfield, Massachusetts. I gave about ten speeches a week to the Rotary and the Kiwanis. I spoke to the men because it was the men that didn't want the women to go in the army. The women wanted to go but their husbands wouldn't let them, or their fathers. So anyhow, I did that for a while, and then there was another lack where they needed someone to... they were going to have some kind of inspection at the first service command and they found they had no women in charge of the education of people already in the Army. So I went down to first service command to be in charge of the women's training at posts, camps, and stations, as they called it, throughout New England.

Then I had a marvelous, marvelous opportunity to put in an application for something that was called the School of Military Government at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. They said they might take one or two women. I remember I had a very good boss there,

named Colonel Clement Kennedy, who was head of the Oceanhouse in Swampscott in his civilian... is it Oceanhouse? Yes, I think it is. He said, “What do you want to do, be governor of the island of Yap?” I said, “That mightn't be bad, I don't know where Yap is.” So anyhow, to make a long story short, as the clich# says, I was chosen to go to the School of Military Government at Charlottesville, which was to be followed by almost a year of Japanese language and area training at the University of Michigan.

Q: Oh, really?

DONOVAN: So this was very fine because there were 246 men and fouwomen.

Q: Two hundred and how many men?

DONOVAN: Forty-six.

Q: Two forty-six men.

DONOVAN: And four women. And one of them never made it gettinthere, so there were only three.

Q: So you were, early on, used to being a minority, weren't you?

DONOVAN: Oh yes. But it was fun. Only thing is, I don't know why I didn't latch on to one of them right away. The only trouble is they mostly all had wives at home, which was in those days—doesn't seem to be so important now—but in those days you didn't...

Q: You didn't date a married man.

DONOVAN: You didn't date a married man, period. Anyhow, that was great fun. We studied hard again at the School of Military Government because three of us studied together, we couldn't be beaten by all those men. I came out twelfth in that class, I think.

Q: Good for you.

DONOVAN: One of my colleagues came out third, but we were still pretty high in the ratings. A lot of them were colonels back from the European theater of war. They were just...

Q: Was this getting ready for the occupation?

DONOVAN: Yes. It was getting ready for what was thought would be an eventual victory in Japan. A military government would be set up as it was already set up in Europe.

Q: What does this SCAP refer to?

DONOVAN: Oh, that's coming up in just a moment.

Q: Okay. This University of Michigan, that would be what year, 1945?

DONOVAN: Yes. We finished our course in August, 1945. In April of that year was VE, the victory in Europe. Then there were similar courses at other universities. There were four of them, I think, one at the University of Chicago, and one at somewhere else. See, I had a whole year, almost, of Japanese language and area training at the University of Michigan. I have a photograph of that crowd in there. It was a marvelous course. We only studied the oral Japanese, because, of course, the written is an entirely different language. We had sensei, our Japanese teachers, from all over the... who were not Nisei, but they were real Japanese who were living in the United States, so we learned the accent of the Tokyo Imperial University. So even though I couldn't speak Japanese very well when I got to Japan, at least my accent was good. [Laughter]

Q: And that's so important.

DONOVAN: The studies in various fields, I took education because that's what I knew most about, and I didn't want to become a specialist in science and technology, for

reasons you well know. So anyway, in August we finished and we went across the country on a train that was still blacked out.

Q: Is that so?

DONOVAN: I remember sneaking out with the rest of them and dropping pennies into the Great Salt Lake. Then we stayed at a staging area in California, and we went on a ship. By this time we were joined by the sixteen other women who were at the other universities.

Q: That's all there were?

DONOVAN: All there were.

Q: A total of 16 women?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: Isn't that something?

DONOVAN: They marked out a bailiwick for us on ship so we wouldn't be bothered by all these men. We landed in Japan in October, '45, which was very close to the beginning, because you remember the signing of the Missouri was the signing of the end of the war, it wasn't the peace treaty, but on the Missouri the surrender was in September. So Tokyo was pretty beat up. I have some pictures in there how it looked in those days.

Q: You arrived in Yokohama?

DONOVAN: We arrived in Yokohama and we stood up in the back of a truck going up the road to Tokyo. There was nothing on the road but little rusty square iron safes which were all that was left of the Japanese little houses that had been there and were burned down, mostly in the Doolittle raid of that year.

Q: You must have seen an awful lot of fire damage. People aren'aware of that in this country.

DONOVAN: We passed a big billboard saying “You are now entering Tokyo by courtesy of the First Cavalry Division.” They made them change that later on to “home of.” We were taken to a hotel called the Daichi, which was built originally for Olympic games that never took place. There were little small rooms, but they gave each of us a room that had a little tiny bathtub in it, and there I stayed for a good many years.

This is where SCAP comes in. General MacArthur's title was Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. That's SCAP. I went into a division called CIE, Civil Information and Education Section, of the GHQ, General Headquarters, of SCAP.

Q: Civil Information and what was the rest of that?

DONOVAN: Civil Information and Education Section. That was all Japanese Civil Information and Education Section. There I stayed as an education officer. In that division, the education section, they were all pretty much generalists, that is, in secondary education and other things. I was also Women's Education Officer. That's the first and only time that I have ever worked exclusively or primarily on women's matters. But they were very glad to see me.

Q: What specifically were the women's matters at this time?

DONOVAN: Well, for example, I don't like to go on too long...

Q: No, no this is very interesting, very important.

DONOVAN: Early in the game General MacArthur said that women would be allowed to enter the Imperial Universities. There were four or five Imperial Universities that were the very best. But they were not trained to pass the examinations to enter. They had women's

colleges, so-called, fine schools, but they were really high school level according to the way we would call it, and the girls weren't prepared to go much higher. So then you had to look and see why that was, because I kept my mouth shut for three months after I first got there and just listened to the Japanese women educators. There was one, Miss Hoshino, who was a Wellesley College graduate who had a college called Tsuda, T-S-U-D-A, which was one of the best. Then there was Nippon Joshi Daigaku, Japan Women's University, and they had some fine teachers, too. I just listened to them and their ideas. I wasn't imposing anything. I was learning. Finally when Miss Hoshino thought she knew me well enough, she pulled out a little book in Japanese from under her futon where she had kept it all during the war, called Education for Women in the New Japan, dated 1925. When the militarists took control, they banned her book from the libraries and the newsstands and said that all copies must be destroyed.

Q: Was it a book she'd written?

DONOVAN: Yes. She kept one. She had translated... I think she had an English copy too, because how could I have read it otherwise? She said, “You know, there isn't anything very new. We have known and wanted all these changes for many years but we were forbidden to have them.” Then I had to go farther and farther down. I found that the girls' education at the primary and at what we would call the elementary level was quite different from the boys, because they had separate textbooks, like first year arithmetic for boys and first year arithmetic for girls, the same with history and geography and science. And they were all at a lower level than the boys. And the farther on they got in the school system, the greater the difference became. So even those that were fortunate enough to go to one of the colleges... So then I had to say, “Why is this? This seems strange in a subject which is no different. It's arithmetic, it's the same... “Well, because they were spending so much time on cooking and sewing. The extra hours were taken from these academic subjects. So they said, “We can't use the same text book when we don't have the same hours of instruction.” Then I found, I don't know how I found her, whether she came to me or how I found her, I found a young woman named Matsuo Omoi who had been, I think they called

it domestic science or homemaking education, at one of the good universities on the west coast.

Q: U.S. west coast?

DONOVAN: Yes, the U.S. west coast. And she had gone back to Japan. She said, “Eileen, this is the difference. I could draw up a curriculum in which they learn as much as they do now in cooking and so on without spending all those inordinate number of hours on it.”

Q: Sounds like a man had set it up in the first place. [Laughter]

DONOVAN: So anyway, then the Minister of Education was called the Mombusho. I used to go over, and heaven help me, talk to them about American education, just in an academic sort of way. I wasn't telling them they should do anything like it. And anyway, with the help of the other people in the education division, the boss, a man named Mark Orr who's now at the University of South Florida, we got the Mombusho to agree to let Matsuo Omoi prepare a new curriculum in homemaking, which would then do away with the necessity of having separate textbooks. Then gradually this thing could be evened out. But it wasn't a one day project.

Q: Of course not.

DONOVAN: I spent a lot of time on that. Then I also spent some time... the only reason I'm in the book over here was because they had an “Imperial Rescriptive 1900,” which was issued by the Emperor, really by his minions, saying that the purpose of education was loyalty and filial piety, which is all right. Those are lovely, lovely things, except that they didn't interpret them as we would. Loyalty meant strictly to the emperor and so did filial piety. So when the militarists got in charge, they used these things and this rescript was the basis for all the education in Japan at the lower levels. We'd studied this thing at the University of Michigan. But we hadn't done anything about it. One of the ministers of education was very fond of this and we hadn't done anything about it. How could you say

that education meant helping people to think when there was nothing but these things? And then the end of it, it ended up “loyalty to our emperor, coeval in heaven and earth.” It was really emperor worship Shinto-style. So I said, “Mark, we've got to get rid of this thing. It's silly to go on talking about democratic education when you have this.” So I did a lot of studying on it and I went to a wonderful man named Tom Blakemore, who was the only American who had been graduated from the Tokyo Imperial University Law School and we found out the meaning of the words and the connotations. Finally—it was a Ministry of Education decree—but we suggested firmly that it be done, that it was no longer the basis for education.

Q: That's pretty basic, yes, very basic. DONOVAN: Remind me, I'll show you that.

Q: And very far-reaching.

DONOVAN: Yes. You asked me what I was doing in Japan. Those are the highlights. Then I had another idea. Who were we? We were all in that place, former schoolteachers and school principals and things, who were we to be making such decisions? History would call us to account. By gosh, we'd better get some really well-known educators over there. So we invited what turned out to be an education mission to Japan, consisting of what started out as the fifty most famous educators.

Q: Ethel Weed?

DONOVAN: She didn't do the education, though, she was concerned witthe women - there were four or five women in the Japanese Diet.

Q: Concerned with the politicians?

DONOVAN: The political part of it.

Q: That's fascinating, you had a captain's rank?

DONOVAN: No, not quite yet. I did before I finished there. I was first lieutenant. Then a lot of my women's friends there looked at that uniform, and, not a lot but one or two, said “Were you with Doolittle when they bombed Tokyo?” So I decided to get out of uniform. I became a civilian while I was there. I got my release from active duty at the Zama in Japan. It's a place where you went. I became a civilian.

Q: What sort of a place is this?

DONOVAN: We used to call it the repple-depple. It's the Zama replacement depot. It's a place where you went to - it's not important at all. I became a civilian and that's when I started writing my mother frantic letters for clothes. But I didn't know I was going to be in this book which is called...

Q: Unconditional Democracy.

DONOVAN: Education and Politics in Occupied Japan by Toshio Nishi. I'm not going to ask you to read this now, but he has a whole section about the...

Q: Oh, yes, “Donovan objected there were not...” Oh very, very good.

DONOVAN: About the imperial rescript.

Q: Very good. In the course of your work did you have any reason tsee the general, MacArthur?

DONOVAN: Yes, but not too often. I did that when I went back in 1949 on the education exchange survey mission. There were two or three people in between me and the general.

Q: Well, I imagine he was sort of an awesome figure, wasn't he?

DONOVAN: Yes.

We had General MacArthur invite over what started out to be the fifty most famous educators to Japan to look at what we were doing and to write a report so that we'd have somebody other than...

Q: Some authority, weight of authority?

DONOVAN: Yes. We did that, and they came in the spring of 1946. It was a slightly different group than we had originally asked for. We picked out people in various fields, but when it got to Washington naturally they had to have a representative of the CIO, and they had to have one black, and I remember a little Irish catholic priest who came to me when the word got out that we were doing such a thing, and he got hold of the list, and he said, “Eileen Donovan, do you realize that there's not a Catholic name on this list?” I said, “No, I never thought of it. What has that got to do with it?” I said, “As a matter of fact, let me look at it again,” and I read down. I said, “There's not a Jewish name on there either.” Anyhow they came, and they more or less agreed with what we were doing except I thought they never gave the... the women's education was not in the report.

Q: Oh, is that right?

DONOVAN: I thought they slighted them all. I gave them all kinds of lectures and I had my Japanese women leaders talk to them and visited schools and stuff.

Q: So, in effect, they were perpetuating the same old malsupremacy, weren't they?

DONOVAN: No. They weren't doing that.

Q: But they were by default, weren't they?

DONOVAN: Yes, isn't that nice?

Q: That's lovely.

DONOVAN: This is the education division when I first got there.

Q: Oh, for heaven's sake, all men except for yourself. How about that? You certainly got used early to being the token woman, didn't you?

DONOVAN: Yes. That was several years later when they got all thlocal employees and everybody else in there.

Q: Not too many women then.

DONOVAN: Well, there are plenty. They're all clerks, but... anyway.

Q: To get back to this business, why didn't [they] give more weighto the women's part of it? They didn't think it was important?

DONOVAN: I don't know. They had... those are all pictures of going over. Here's the sign “Entering Tokyo.” There are some pictures that were smuggled out of Hiroshima within an hour of the bombing.

Q: Oh, my. Oh, my.

DONOVAN: That's me visiting one of the schools where the littlgirls dug up their kimonos from underground.

Q: And put them on?

DONOVAN: Yes, that's me, God help me, giving a lecture to thministry of education people.

Q: Good for you.

DONOVAN: I have a nerve.

Q: No, why not, you were the authority.

DONOVAN: I mean I knew at the time. I wrote down here, “if the Japanese keep a book of future war criminals, if they go to war with us again, I'll probably head the list.” Imagine me, a woman, doing this. On my left is Terry Nishi. That's about what Tokyo looked like.

Q: Oh, boy, what a mess. What a mess.

DONOVAN: I'm looking for the education mission.

Q: Part of the mission at the Tokyo. Would that be it?

DONOVAN: They had- (end of tape)

-he formed an orchestra called Hiroshi Watanabe and the Stardusters.

Q: (Laughter) I love it. Hiroshi Watanabe and the Stardusters,that's lovely.

DONOVAN: That was up on the roof.

Q: You finally left the service in 1948, is that right?

DONOVAN: Yes. I was a civilian then in the same job. This was when I was still wearing a uniform without any insignia before my mother sent me clothes.

Q: You see there was a very good reason to ask your mother for althose clothes. Nothing available locally, I'm sure.

DONOVAN: Those were at various farewell parties. Remember how thewere always having those?

Q: Those pictures are priceless. They really are. You'vdocumented the whole era here. And you made good captions.

DONOVAN: This stopped at this book. The rest of them don't have it. What am I looking for? Now, I wonder. I don't know. There was a strange thing that happened then. In 1948 there was a telegram from General Marshall listing six names of people who had never come back for their Foreign Service oral examinations. The war came in between. I had been interested in the Foreign Service.

Q: You had met, I suppose, Foreign Service people?

DONOVAN: No, I hadn't. There were some but they were all at U.S. POLAD, the Office of the political advisor. They were quite separate from General MacArthur's people. So this telegram came saying if these people can be located, they may fly back home on a space available basis to take the oral examinations before the end of April when we close up. Well, they found me and they found a man in China and they found another man in Korea.

Q: You had already taken the writtens?

DONOVAN: No, I didn't take the writtens. I put in applications but I hadn't taken the writtens. Anyway, I was on their list. I don't know how. I said to Mark, “I cannot go home and take this examination now. It's a two and a half hour... I don't know anything except what's been going on here. I haven't had any French.” You had to take it in a world language also, in the oral. Japanese was not allowed because it wasn't a world language. I was better at that than anything else at that point. I said, “I can't do this.” But I had thought of it before but I hadn't gone back because it cost $2,000 round trip, and there was so little chance of passing. But I still carried around Chardenal, One and Two. Those were my basic high school French books. He said, “Listen Eileen, stop work. I'll find all the French records in Tokyo and you can listen to them with a wet cloth over your brow and you'll get the sound back. Then you can study the vocabulary index of these two books that were mildewing.” I said, “Yes, but I don't know what's going on in the world in Latin America, in Europe.” And so I had another friend who had collected Time Magazines and he spent a day or two clipping them out according to areas of the world, and stapled them together

so that I could read and get a chronological—not that I trust Time Magazine, but it's good enough for this purpose.

Q: Sure. Sure.

DONOVAN: Anyway, I went home on a space available basis, a bucket seat job. It didn't go all the way, but that's another story. I arrived there the last week that one could and my mother had sent me, and I had received, a very nice looking black suit and a little black velvet sort of beret thing that came down over one eye. I had white gloves, of course, and high heels and thought, “Well, this is going to be fun.” I hadn't anything to lose. And I could go to Boston for the weekend.

So I walked in and saw the oral [panel] with the three men here and two men here to watch and see if... You know, when men get nervous they have a little thing... something to watch. So that was an experience.

Q: When was this, exactly?

DONOVAN: That's in your outline there. April of '48. So they started right off and said, “Well, Miss Donovan, if you so want to join the Foreign Service, why don't you marry a Foreign Service officer?” This shows how far the way it was compared to today. That took me a little bit by surprise, but I said, “I might someday. What does one look like?”

Q: Good for you!

DONOVAN: I was kind of fresh. I said, “I've never seen one.” Well, I had seen a few from POLAD but... then they said, “Do you know that if you should be admitted to the Foreign Service you would have to resign if you married?”

Q: They actually said that to you ?

DONOVAN: Yes. I said, “No, I didn't know that. That wouldn't bother me too much because the man that I would marry would probably insist on it anyway, especially if he were a Foreign Service officer.” I said, “I've taken no vows of any kind. Where is this written that you have to resign?” He said, “It's in the Foreign Service regulations.” I said, “What are they?”

Q: It actually was in the regs [regulations]? I didn't think so.

DONOVAN: It never was. I searched for it for many years and then gave up and found out that this was just a... no, it never was.

Q: That's what I thought.

DONOVAN: They wouldn't dare write it down.

Q: All unspoken.

DONOVAN: But that was procedure. So anyway, then they started off. Do you want to hear the rest of this?

Q: Absolutely, absolutely, yes.

DONOVAN: It's probably unique. They started off by asking me, “What is the purpose of the meeting that morning in Bogota. Well, it just so happened that I had a little time to wait that morning and I had a New York Times, which was all full of this meeting in Bogota. I didn't even know where Bogota was.

Q: But you knew what the meeting was about?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: Good for you.

DONOVAN: So, I answered that question. Then there was a man that was a public member. He said, “Will you name for me the five hidalgos of Latin America. Name five hidalgos.”

Q: Good Lord.

DONOVAN: I said, “The word is unfamiliar to me except in the Treaty of Guadeloupe Hidalgo, the end of the Mexican War in 1848. He said, “You don't know the word hidalgo?” I said, “No.” He said, “It's a very common Spanish word that means the George Washington of his country. I said, “Oh, well, I know there was an Irishman named—whatever was his name who was one of those Central American leaders—O'Higgins. Then there was...

Q: Simon Bolivar.

DONOVAN: Yes, I named Bolivar. Then I stopped and I said, “I'm sorry, I'm a little bit rusty on Latin America.” That went on, and then came the language pieces. It was a big page of... they said read it through.

Q: The same people had you do the French?

DONOVAN: Yes, and then read it in French and then translate it.

Q: Right there on the spot?

DONOVAN: Right then and there on the spot. So, I read it. Some of the vocabulary here and there that... like whole clause of... I thought, “Well here we go.”

Q: What a terrible spot to be in.

DONOVAN: I read it beautifully in French because the sounds of those records were still going through my head. The accent was good. Then I said, “Now let's see.” I stumbled

through and then I said, “I'm sorry there's a clause in here I don't know the vocabulary. Have to leave that out.” I stumbled through it and I thought, “Don't worry anymore, this is the end of the exam.” They said, “You're a little bit rusty in French, aren't' you?” I said, “Rusty? I'm just a bunch of rust.” So they said, “If you should pass this examination, would you guarantee to brush up your French?” I said, “Oh, yes, Sir. That's the first thing I'll do.” So then they put that aside and then they started on Japan. What was General MacArthur really doing there? Well, then I could go to town. So I did, for about an hour.

Q: Did they ask you to speak in Japanese? DONOVAN: No.

Q: Well, that's too bad, then you could have recouped all thFrench, couldn't you?

DONOVAN: Yes, but that wasn't part of the exam.

Q: No, too bad.

DONOVAN: I think they had three what they call world languages then,French...

Q: Is that all?

DONOVAN: Only three you could take, French or Spanish or German.

Q: Really? Only those three?

DONOVAN: And I'm not sure about the German. Anyway. So then I had a great time. I mean I figured I'd flunked the exam anyway, and I was wondering when the next plane to Boston was going to be. I could go home for the weekend and then come back and fly back. So it was two and a half hours. You don't get notified then and there. You wait and get a letter. So I was in washing, I washed some of the perspiration off.

Q: I can imagine.

DONOVAN: ...and powdered my nose and put on fresh lipstick, and I came out of the ladies room, and this little public member—they'd gone to the men's room, too—he lagged behind. He said, “Miss Donovan, I'm not supposed to do this, but I'm a public member, and I thought you'd like to know we passed you unanimously and with the highest honors.”Q: How wonderful!

DONOVAN: And he said, “There'd been 200 women in the past two yearand we had passed none.” Not that board, but the boards.

Q: Had been 200 women! That's wonderful. You must have been verelated.

DONOVAN: Oh, my gosh, I was flying on air.

Q: You credited it to the fact that you knew so much about Japan?

DONOVAN: That helped, toward the end.

Q: You probably did better than you thought you had on the others,anyway.

DONOVAN: Well, I don't know.

Q: A lot of it is to see how you handle yourself, isn't it?

DONOVAN: I suppose so. But anyway...

Q: Do you remember who was on your board?

DONOVAN: No, I don't. I don't. I did remember the name of that public member until recently, now I've forgotten. I didn't know any of them, never saw any of them before or since.

Q: But all men?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: Five men, did you say?

DONOVAN: Yes. Three at this T-shaped table, three at the head and two on either side to watch, their side reflections, I guess, and me at the tip. So I was really flying on air by then. I didn't need the airplane.

Q: Deservedly.

DONOVAN: When I did get the letter I found that they had reduced msalary by more than 50% from what I was getting.

Q: In the army?

DONOVAN: As a civilian. I was a P-6.

Q: You were a government GS?

DONOVAN: There were two kinds then, professional and GS. The GS'were administrative and clerical.

Q: And you were called a professional.

DONOVAN: I was a P-6, and I had a good high salary for that day anage, which was $9,000 a year.

Q: That was a lot.

DONOVAN: When I came in at the bottom of an O-5—there were six classes—I came in at the bottom of an O-5 at the munificent salary of $4,500 a year.

Q: Good heavens.

DONOVAN: I'm probably the only one in history that's reduced their salary that much for the privilege of becoming a Foreign Service officer.

Q: Did it make you think twice?

DONOVAN: No.

Q: No, you really wanted to be in the Foreign Service. What do yothink made you have this interest in the Foreign Service?

DONOVAN: Well, I was always interested in history and diplomacy. I wrote my master's thesis in college—it was a lousy thesis, in retrospect, it was all from books—called The diplomatic relations with Mexico, 1910 to 1935. It was all about the oil problem. I just was interested. It was a lot more fascinating than teaching school in Boston for the next 40 years.

Q: You wanted to live the history rather than just to teach it,perhaps?

DONOVAN: I wanted to be part of the action.

Q: Sure. Well you have been.

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: You certainly have been. That's terrific.

DONOVAN: That brings us up to... now I'm in the Foreign Service.

Q: You're in the Foreign Service, and tell me something, you goyour letter back in Japan?

DONOVAN: Yes. I had to go take a physical somewhere up in Brighton,someplace. That I passed because I didn't mark any little circles.

Q: You had to take a...

DONOVAN: A physical examination right then and there after that,which I took in some marine headquarters up in Boston on that weekend.

Q: Oh, I see. How would they do that if... Oh, I see, that was contingent. If you didn't pass that, you couldn't be in? Because you supposedly didn't know yet.

DONOVAN: I didn't know yet.

Q: But they told you to take the physical, okay.

DONOVAN: I don't know how that happened, but I took it.

Q: So you got all that out of the way. And you heard when you were in Japan. Now what did they do, did you have any ceremony to enter the Foreign Service? You had to stand up and swear that...

DONOVAN: You always take an oath. The administrative officer in U.S. POLAD. They were going to send me back to Washington for basic officer training so I'd learn what a Foreign Service officer was, I suppose. There were all kinds of farewell parties. I was about to leave and they got a telegram saying that I would be assigned to U.S. POLAD as liaison with the Japanese government.

Q: That's the first time I've heard of the Department doing something that intelligent. Usually if you speak Japanese they send you to Africa.

DONOVAN: Then they wanted to know, even then I didn't know it then, but they really wanted to know what General MacArthur had been doing. They were out in the cold, that office.

Q: He just didn't tell them?

DONOVAN: The head of the office was a man named Atcheson with a T and then Siebold, who was on their council, and all that. He was an advisor to General MacArthur, but to all intents and purposes there was only one boss there and that was General MacArthur. So I went over to U.S. POLAD and I took my oath of office and took a photograph for a diplomatic passport. No ceremonies. Then I was assigned to a young man who didn't know what to do with me. He said, “You said you never read the Foreign Service regulations, here they are.” In those days they were mimeographed, a pile about that high.

Q: Oh, is that right?

DONOVAN: I said, “Well, I don't know if I want to read all of these, but I'll check out a few things.” He then was preparing a diplomatic list for the Japanese government. I remember my first hot afternoon as a Foreign Service officer. I will never forget it. He had piles of these pages of mimeographed material. I think there were ninety. All of which had to be, what is the word you use to put things together?

Q: Collated?

DONOVAN: Collated. He said, “You could help with this. Just start around at this end of the table and go right around and collate these pages.”

Q: That was your first job in the Foreign Service?

DONOVAN: Yes. There was a young woman, Department of the Army secretary, that was working for him, and presumably for me too, but she didn't seem to realize that. She came back from somewhere where she'd gotten a Coke out of a Coke machine that was somewhere around there. She sat down at her desk with a Good Housekeeping Magazine and had ice cold Coke. So I was walking around the table and I said, “You know we could get this done twice as fast, if you help me do this.” She said, “He didn't ask me to do it, he asked you.” I thought to myself, “Someday, young lady, someday...”

Q: “You'll get yours.”

DONOVAN: However, she was a temporary employee from the Department of the Army. She was not a Foreign Service type herself and her name was BO Kelly.

Q: See how you've remembered that.

DONOVAN: I remember. You remember certain things.

Q: Yes, you do.

DONOVAN: So gradually I advanced from collating papers. It was 95, I think, in that office, with no air conditioners. Then however, not more than six months later, I was ordered back to the Department to what they call the Japan-Korea branch public affairs section. It was one of those predecessors of the Department version of USIA. They didn't have any then. So we had another set of farewell parties and that time I went, in November of '48. Went back to the Department as Japan-Korea desk officer. I never did have any basic training.

Q: Never got it at all? No basic training. You were thrown in tsink or swim, weren't you?

DONOVAN: That's right.

Q: You never went through that course at FSI?

DONOVAN: No, I went through other courses later, many of them.

Q: But you didn't go through that beginning one? No.

DONOVAN: So, where do you want to go from here, coach? [Laughter] Did you have that down there that I was trying to start a cultural exchange program in that job?

Q: Yes.

DONOVAN: Then they decided to send me on another mission which was just a small one, called the Education Exchange Survey Mission, in 1949, in the summer. There were only five people on it and I was the Department member of that. So I went off in the middle of this job to that.

Q: The others were from the Department of Education?

DONOVAN: No, no. There was one, John Dale Russell was head of the office of education. The chairman was a man named Tulley, who was Chancellor of Syracuse University. There were two others. Their pictures are in another book here somewhere. So we went back to Japan because none of these men really approved... didn't understand General MacArthur, didn't know what he was trying to do. We had a luncheon with General MacArthur and his wife right near the beginning. It was one of those wonderful luncheons that he's had many times before, I think, in which Mrs. MacArthur would greet us, you know, a charming southern lady, then he'd come in from the Daichi building where he worked, and then we'd sit down at the lunch table - I don't remember whether they gave us a cocktail or not, probably not. So I, being the only lady again, was on his right and Mrs. MacArthur was at the end of the table. So he turned to me and he said, I don't know if he really remembered me, but if he didn't Larry Buckler or one of his minions had briefed him. He never went anywhere without being briefed—he said, “Well, Miss Donovan do you like the State Department better than the army?” I said, “Well, sir, actually I'm doing very much the same type of work. I loved it when I was in the Army and working with you, but one thing I didn't like was that necktie on a woman in peace time. Now I don't have to wear the necktie anymore.” So then he asked me a couple of other simple questions. Then came the - I'm sure it was the routine—Mrs. MacArthur said to him from the end of the table, “Gen'al, Chancellor Tulley has asked me a question which you can answer much better than I. If Chancellor Tulley would repeat his question to you.” So then Chancellor Tulley repeated his question, and of course there was silence at the rest of the table. And General MacArthur answered with a nice short answer that took about twenty-five minutes.

Then he said, “Are there any other questions?” And somebody asked another question, and somebody asked another question. I think we sat there at that table for two and a half hours. He answered beautifully in his wonderful rhetoric, and splendidly and he knew what he was doing.

Q: Was he frank?

DONOVAN: Yes. Yes he was. I didn't hear anything that I myself would have questioned. When we went out, two of the men said, “Hey, he's 'whatever the version at that time was of' he's really something”. They were all tremendously impressed. Then we had an interview with the emperor, too.

Q: Did you?

DONOVAN: I went out in the backyard and patted the emperor's whithorse. I have a picture of that, too.

Q: Oh, yes, that famous white horse.

DONOVAN: Then we came back after a month or so. Then I was assigneagain. You see I was doing all these things while I was on that job.

Q: Of course.

DONOVAN: John D. Rockefeller III, who had been to Japan and was most impressed, was writing, not a book but a pamphlet, a study on cultural relations with Japan. He didn't know so very much to write it. He knew quite a lot, but not to sit down and write a report. So there was another chap there in the Department of State who was an old Japan hand named Doug Overton. The two of us were assigned to go up to New York and stay at a hotel and go to John D's office every day and help him write his report, which we did.

Q: Did you? It pays to be a Rockefeller.

DONOVAN: I think I have that report somewhere. I've got a bunch, footlocker here.

Q: Have you? With your papers in it?

DONOVAN: There are some papers that are useful and some are not. I think the report of the education mission is there, and this Rockefeller cultural report, stuff like that. They're stashed away underneath the water heater out there somewhere.

Then I went to Manila. The Korean war came about that time.Everybody lost interest in Japan.

Q: That's right, didn't they?

DONOVAN: 1950.

Q: Did MacArthur have a sense of humor when you were talking abouthe necktie? Did that make him laugh, or did he take it seriously?

DONOVAN: He might have chuckled, I don't know.

Q: I just wondered what the man's personality was?

DONOVAN: He was very serious.

Q: Yes, that's what I thought. Took himself seriously?

DONOVAN: Yes. In order to do that job the way he did, he had thave a super ego, which he did. Many great men have super egos.

Q: Of course, of course.

DONOVAN: Then I was assigned to Manila.

Q: Is this right, that you went there in January of '52, would thabe correct?

DONOVAN: Yes, that's correct.

Q: That would be correct. And you went as political officer?

DONOVAN: That's right.

Q: Did you realize how rare that was, for a woman to be a politicaofficer?

DONOVAN: No. I didn't realize how rare it was, but my boss when got there did. And he said, “Can you type?”

Q: Oh, no!

DONOVAN: I said, “I've never learned to type.” Which was true. I always started but I never finished. He said, “I tell you we need a typist here much more than we need another political officer.” However that too was overcome.

Q: Did you have to learn to type?

DONOVAN: No, I wouldn't touch a typewriter.

Q: Good for you.

DONOVAN: As a matter of fact, I did, but I went...

Q: You know he never would have said that if you had been a man.

DONOVAN: No, he wouldn't have. He was a good guy though.

Q: Undoubtedly. It was just the attitude. It was a given.

DONOVAN: I used to sneak in early with a book my mother had sent mon how to teach yourself to type. But I never got beyond...

Q: You know it makes one wonder if you had been able to type, iyour career might have been totally different.

DONOVAN: It might have been.

Q: You might have started out as a typist and remained a typist.(Laughter) Isn't that awful. I mean that's terrible.

DONOVAN: And especially when... what happened? He was transferred and there was another man who was the consul general who was made chief of the political section, but that was 1953 then, beginning, and they had that awful thing called the RIF, reduction in force. And poor Merrell Benninghoff was out, too.

Q: He was RIFed. That was the consul general?

DONOVAN: So I became acting chief of the political section, which I thoroughly enjoyed because it was the most exciting period in Philippine history. It was very much like it is now. They had a man named Quirino who was a very corrupt president...

Q: Could you spell that for me?

DONOVAN: Q-U-I-R-I-N-O. There was a young man from the barrio named Ramon Magsaysay who was a candidate. He was extremely popular everywhere. This is off the record now. I... know what they really thought about Magsaysay.

Q: This was after the election?

DONOVAN: No, before the election. I used to go to all thconventions and all that stuff.

Q: You were handling the whole section alone?

DONOVAN: No. There was man there, two of us. Nobody ever knew what the Moros thought, the people down in Jolo. So I'd become quite good friends with a Filipino senator who came from that area. He said, “I'm going to fly down to dedicate a Red Cross something or other. You can fly down with me and fly back and see the place.” Fly down to Zamboanga and then go off across the water, off the south China Sea. I wanted to go to Zamboanga anyway, on my own, so I flew down. But I thought he could take me over the Jolo because it was his constituency near the Moros. Most of them didn't speak English. When I got to Zamboanga, after a day or two there doing various things, I got a message from him that he had canceled his trip. I thought, “What do I do know, go back to Manila with my tail between my legs?” So I went around and I found a little commercial boat, [that] went over to Jolo every other night. It's an all night trip. Mostly with commercial travelers, as we call them, and chickens and hens and things like that. I booked myself a passage on this boat.

Q: Weren't you frightened?

DONOVAN: No, I wasn't smart enough to be frightened. I was a little when I inquired around, from whom I don't remember, from some of the steamship booking places and there were Filipinos and Captain Jack something and they said he was the most reliable. He had a cabin on boat. He said, “I want to give you my cabin.” There was a shrine there with a vigil light burning in front of it. I thought, “He's probably reliable, on the other hand, I go and lock myself into this cabin on this boat, anything could happen, because I was still fairly young. I thanked him very much and told him that I loved the fresh air and that I would sleep on the deck with the other commercial travelers, which I did. I didn't sleep, but at four o'clock in the morning when I got there and a rooster started to crow, at least I wasn't locking myself into a dim, dark cabin that belonged to the captain. That was smart.

Q: Probably very smart.

DONOVAN: But the rest of the whole trip was probably not smart. So then I went to this funny little so-called hotel. I was carrying a duffel bag, I think. Then I decided to go and see the man I that I would have gone to see had the senator been with me., and I found him. We had a nice interview. He liked Magsaysay and so did all the people. Then I walked through the Moro villages which is probably not quite so bright a thing to do all alone. However, they all smiled and yelled, “Hello, Joe,” at me. That was all the English they knew.

Q: “Hello, Joe,” how sweet.

DONOVAN: G.I. Joe.

Q: The Moros are a tribe?

DONOVAN: Yes. They're the people that live in southern Philippines.

[BREAK]

Q: That is where we left off before luncheon, talking about the Moros. You say at this point you had been put in charge of the office, and I see by your record that you had also been promoted to a four. Now, you were not troubled at all by the shaking up of the Foreign Service at that time, where so many people who were fours slid back and became fives? That is when they changed the Foreign Service from six categories to eight categories of officers. Do you remember that?

DONOVAN: No.

Q: You didn't get involved in any of that? Good. Where did yolive in Manila? What sort of housing did you have there?

DONOVAN: I had a small apartment in a building called Dewey Arms which was on a boulevard there. They didn't have any space when I first came. I lived in the Bayview Hotel

or something like that. Then there was a consular officer there who was living in a tin hut in one of the compounds further out. So they said if we would share the apartment, we could have it.

Q: The State Department is the one who set this up?

DONOVAN: Yes, the administrative officer at the embassy there. So I said, “I don't really want to share an apartment,” but I didn't see much future.

Q: Housing was so primitive.

DONOVAN: We had lunch one day and we sort of walked around each other cautiously and asked a few questions and then decided we could take a chance with each other. So we did. It was Marybelle Eversol, a vice consul there. It was adequate. There wasn't much furniture, and it was very beat up. I had some made, this stuff, that's Philippine mahogany.

Q: Is it? It's lovely.

DONOVAN: They call it yellow mahogany. It's been recovered sincbut the basic...

Q: And you had these made there?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: It's certainly stood up beautifully.

DONOVAN: And these tables and that table there.

Q: It's a heavy wood, isn't it?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: Very nice. I suppose you did the usual entertaining?

DONOVAN: Yes, yes.

Q: Of local people as well as your colleagues.

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: Was there a large diplomatic colony there at that time?

DONOVAN: I remember the Chinese. They were out there. The Taiwan Chinese. I can remember their parties on 10-10 day and their fireworks and the British were there and the French. I don't remember. Frankly, I've not focused on that for long.

Q: But most of your time I suppose was spent with the Philippinpeople because that was...

DONOVAN: I got to know lots of them. I got to know Senator Clarrow Riktal, who was one of the opposition leaders who had been accused of collaborating with the Japanese. I don't believe he ever did. I believe what he did was just for the good of the Filipino people, but I was in the minority. I got to know a lot of them. When I left Manila I had to write my efficiency report. There was an advisor in the embassy who had lived in the Philippines for 37 years. So he wrote a very nice statement which was incorporated in the papers that were used as a nomination for the federal women's award in 1969. I managed to get a hold of the nomination papers after it was all over. I have it in there. And he said that I, more than anyone else that he'd ever known in the embassy, I had the ability to—I forget his exact words—to size up local interests and our national interests and combine them without anybody getting mad at me.

Q: That's quite a compliment, I should say.

DONOVAN: If you want that thing, it might be very useful for you.

Q: Yes, it would be.

DONOVAN: Especially the end of it where it summarizes pretty well what we've been talking about. Then there's a very fine statement that was written to the press by a black Barbados senator, which is used at the end. I sent that to the young man in EUR who was writing this thing. It was changed over then to ARA, the responsibility for it, so he never got it sent in that year. But he had it written down. This is probably one of the nicest things that was ever said about me.

Q: How nice. This is for the federal women's award which you won i1969?

DONOVAN: Yes. We've skipped some things, haven't we? We've skippeManila, we've skipped Milano.

Q: Yes, well, we haven't gotten to Milano yet.

DONOVAN: We haven't?

Q: No, because you were talking about your times in Manila and you said when we were at luncheon you were the 13th woman only in the Foreign Service? I've got that number right. It's hard to realize how few of you there were after the war. Very, very few. As far as you were concerned, the reporting done on you, that is to say, your efficiency reports, were all very fair?

DONOVAN: They all were but one.

Q: All but one?

DONOVAN: Which I didn't complain about. We didn't have any... thedo now, these gripe sessions. [grievance board]

Q: Oh, I should say. Now, in 1954 you were then sent to Milan?Milano.

DONOVAN: That's right.

Q: 1954. And you were the acting principal officer? DONOVAN: At first I was economic officer.

Q: How did you happen to be economic officer when you'd beepolitical officer in Manila?

DONOVAN: Because the old stud book of that era said that I had taught history and economics in the Boston high schools, which was true except that the economics was at a very, very low level. I remember I used to teach the law of diminishing returns by saying that the second ice cream cone didn't taste as good as the first. That was the level of economics. Of course they found out later that I wasn't even sure how to count martinis. (Laughter)

When I left Manila I didn't know where I was going. I just went into Washington. Somebody said that in order to be well-rounded, if you were going ahead in the Foreign Service, you had to have other jobs than political jobs. They had read about my teaching economics and so they'd given me this job of economic officer in Milano. I said, “Gee, I don't think this is fair. The big problem now that I've been reading about in Italy is the convertibility of currency. I don't know one thing about that.” They said, “Don't worry. There's a treasury attach# down at the embassy in Rome who takes care of that sort of thing.” I had forgotten that there was such a thing as an embassy over a consul general.

There I did a lot of commodity reporting and got into a lot of cases of complaints by American citizens against Milan firms. Things like that. There's one I remember very well. You know they needn't have given me an economic job to get me well-rounded, because the pasta in Italy would have done it anyway. But that was the least memorable of my experiences. There was always La Scala if you could either afford to go there or have someone take you, and there were other good things about it, I suppose, but I remember the terrible fogs.

Q: Let's move on. You were promoted again in 1956.

DONOVAN: The man that was head of the place, the consul general, was sent back to Washington to work in EUR so I was acting principal officer there for the next year and a half.

Q: So you had one and a half years as acting principal officer.That must have stretched you somewhat, didn't it?

DONOVAN: Oh yes. Then there was a big deal, the first official U.S. participation in the big Milan trade fair that happens every year in April. That was a lot of preparation and planning.

Q: That was the first time, you say, the U.S. had done this?

DONOVAN: The first time they'd done it under a separate building and separate presentation. Other years they'd been represented at the fair by various Japanese companies.

Q: That must have been a lot of work. How large was the offic there in Milan? How many officers did you have, and U.S. secretaries?

DONOVAN: Oh, I don't remember.

Q: Is that a consulate general?

DONOVAN: Yes. I don't remember. There were probably three economi officers and a political officer and three or four consular officers.

Q: Yes, it's heavily on the consular side, isn't it? And trade, ocourse.

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: Did you have the consul general's house to live in?

DONOVAN: No. I lived in an apartment.

Q: Did you find your allowances were adequate?

DONOVAN: No. They've improved since then, I'm told.

Q: I don't remember in 1954 how it was in Italy, but I imagine iwas pretty expensive, wasn't it?

DONOVAN: Yes. Especially in Milano. Very steep.

Q: So probably on the basis of that, you were promoted to a three, which makes you a first secretary. That was quite an achievement, becoming a first secretary.

DONOVAN: First secretary of what?

Q: Embassy. You weren't at an embassy but if you were going to aembassy 03 is first secretary.

DONOVAN: Is it?

Q: It was. It isn't any more.

DONOVAN: While I was there I was chosen to go to this year aHarvard.

Q: On what basis? How did they happen to come to pick you fothat? Do you remember?

DONOVAN: I made an application. The boss approved it.

Q: And you selected Harvard yourself? Or were you just assigned tHarvard?

DONOVAN: This was a Foreign Service Institute fellowship. Harvard was the only place they went. It was a course called - it was at the Littauer School, the graduate school of

public administration at Harvard. Now, of course, it is the John F. Kennedy School of Government. There were four or five of... no, there wasn't. I don't think there was anyone else from the Department of State that year, but there were people from other government departments who were also in that course. If you studied hard enough and wrote a paper you could be eligible to apply for a master in public administration. It usually took two years. But I lived at home during that year and I didn't do anything else but study and write, so I picked up my MPA, which was interesting.

Q: I should say. It represents a lot of work, a two year course in one. It must have been non-stop studying. Now after that, you came back to the Department, having received your master's degree, and if I have this correctly, you were in what we call INR [Bureau of Intelligence and Research]?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: And you were chief of the south European...

DONOVAN: Branch. Q: Branch, division of research for western Europe.

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: What were your duties in that position?

DONOVAN: Oh, dear. I should have thought of all this before. There were fourteen guys writing things called NISs or National Intelligence Studies on various phases of Italian and Spanish and Portuguese - there were all three in there—economy and politics and things like that. They were all pretty much academic eggheads and all I had to do, really, was to try to speed them up a little bit. They worked like tortoises, having no goal, really, except to finish it.

Q: They weren't FSOs, were they?

DONOVAN: Most of them were not. They were State Department people.

[INTERRUPTION]

Q: Now we're back at INR where you had 11 men working for you. Idoesn't sound as though that was your favorite assignment?

DONOVAN: No, it really wasn't. But the more exciting part of it was the NIEs. Those were the National Intelligence Estimates. Those were more...

Q: Did you do any of this writing or did they do it?

DONOVAN: I didn't on the NISs, no. I did on the NIEs. That was almost a separate thing. There you worked with CIA and various other... you know, you go to meetings and work out an estimate of whether we needed to jump in and draw out Franco. I don't mean that, but I mean they were estimates.

Q: Of how things were at this time.

DONOVAN: Yes, at a certain place, at a certain time. There was moraction in them, you know?

Q: Yes, and I suppose you had to use your own judgment quite a bit.

DONOVAN: Yes. Sometimes it would be overruled. When they came out they were products of INR and CIA and so forth and so on. The NISs were just INR products.

Q: How long did you do that type of work? Was that a couple oyears you did that?

DONOVAN: Yes, I guess it was.

Q: You were selected for the senior seminar two years later. So yodid that for about two years.

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: You like to write, do you?

DONOVAN: Yes, if I know what I'm writing about.

Q: Good thing. You had to do a lot of it. You know we talked over at lunch about the women's movement and that sort of thing. Just while we're talking about this - you're back in the Department now - did you ever feel any bias toward you because you were a woman? Did you ever feel that the men were talking down to you or felt you shouldn't have a position of responsibility? You were in charge of at least 11 people here, all of whom were men. Did you ever have any feeling from them that they resented it?

DONOVAN: No.

Q: As long as you were professional and did your job?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: That's fine, as it should be, certainly. Now this was quite something to be chosen for the senior seminar, because it has been my experience that people chosen for that are the ones that are earmarked.

DONOVAN: So they say.

Q: Did you realize that at the time?

DONOVAN: So they said.

Q: So you did know that you had hit a good thing.

DONOVAN: It was the second class.

Q: It was the second class? Senior seminar. Now tell me how manwomen were in it?

DONOVAN: One.

Q: Eileen Donovan. And that was the second class? DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: Foreign policy. And that was over at FSI?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: In Arlington?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: That was just beginning to take off, wasn't it?

DONOVAN: Yes. The first year was... I don't remember who was ithat. I think it was Margaret Tibbetts.

Q: I think it was Margaret Tibbetts. And the next year after yowas Carol Laise, I think. They sort of put one women in a year.

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: So you were only the second woman ever to go to that. How manmen?

DONOVAN: Oh, dear. I never counted them.

Q: Twenty?

DONOVAN: About twenty.

Q: I think we'd better make the point here, for the record, that while you were the first woman, there weren't all that many women in the Foreign Service, right, to choose from?

DONOVAN: That's right.

Q: So that proportionally for the number of women in, that was probably about right, I guess, because there couldn't have been too many.

DONOVAN: No.

Q: How did you enjoy that?

DONOVAN: You see there was one thing in there that brought a lot of women in. There was some sort of a reorganization after a report by which a lot of people who had been staff officers, women staff officers...

Q: The Wriston report.

DONOVAN: That's it. Wriston. I was trying to think of that name. The Wriston report. So people who had been staff officers could switch over if they passed certain requirements, which I don't know about. So that increased the numbers quite a bit.

Q: Good point.

DONOVAN: As the years went by, a lot of those women went back to the staff corps because the staff corps was not subject to selection out and the Foreign Service was.

Q: It also brought in people from the State Department, didn't it?

DONOVAN: Yes. Q: Laterally, as well as from the Foreign Service staff.

DONOVAN: Yes. Yes, it did. So somewhere in there...

Q: 1956.

DONOVAN: Was it, yes.

Q: That was when it was implemented, yes. And they brought in people from AID [The foreign aid agency, at that time called the Mutual Security Administration.], all over the place. And some worked out and some didn't. How did you enjoy the senior seminar?

DONOVAN: I loved it dearly.

Q: Did you?

DONOVAN: Yes, we went everywhere all over the country, learning whathe country was like now. I made a lot of good friends. They were fun.

Q: Is it hard work?

DONOVAN: If you did your homework it might have been hard. I sorof forgot to do mine. But it was not overwhelmingly hard.

Q: You had to write a paper, I believe?

DONOVAN: You went off with a group of four or five to some place iEurope or somewhere in Africa and you wrote a paper on your findings.

Q: Can you remember what yours was about?

DONOVAN: No, except that we were in London talking with that strategic office there, and we were in Amsterdam and it was something to do with western Europe. That's all I remember, sorry to say.

Q: If you do have that, a copy of that would be something thForeign Service Institute [Library] would want, I'm sure.

DONOVAN: It wasn't very good. It was a committee thing and they'ralways watered down.

Q: But do you think this was a worthwhile year? I have had different reactions from people. Some women think it was just a boondoggle and other think it was really very worthwhile.

DONOVAN: I think it was very worthwhile. Of course I had a tremendous amount of fun when we'd be off on these trips. There was a military man, later an admiral. He was then a captain, named Bill McCormack. Then there was a man named... another Foreign Service officer. I'm getting terrible on names. We used to land out at that military field, Andrews Air Force Base, and then have to take a taxi in. One of them lived in Georgetown and both of them lived in my area. I was living on 21st Street at that time. We were always late at night, eleven, twelve o'clock at night, and I remember they had a sleepy black man at the desk who was always asleep when we came in. Either one or the other, never both, would take my suitcase out of the car and he would bound up the steps with it and then bang it on the floor so the man would be sure and wake up. Then he'd say, “My darling, I shall never forget these few days.” I never quite knew whether that put me up or down in the mind of that man. Then, of course, in a couple of weeks the other fellow would do it.

Q: My, my, my. Let us hope he realized it was all a big joke. So finishing that you then went to Barbados.

DONOVAN: That's right.

Q: As principal political officer.

DONOVAN: Principal officer.

Q: Principal officer. Of course political was understood.

DONOVAN: I went down there because they hadn't had any political reporting for any... the poor man that was there before was so bogged down with consular work that he hadn't had time to write any political reports. This was beginning to be a very important place, you know, the federation of the West Indies was started. Nobody knew anything about it. EUR knew they'd be giving it up in a few years to ARA. Nobody cared. People in ARA thought they spoke Spanish, I think.

Q: Probably did think that, sure. "Everything down that way iSpanish." Did you consider this was a good assignment?

DONOVAN: I considered I might have had a more important one. However, I knew the federation of the West Indies. As a matter of fact, it was one I asked for. Remember when you used to have an April Fool's card and you used to put down the two places you'd most like to go? There was seldom a positive correlation between what you asked for and what you got.

Q: Isn't that true?

DONOVAN: However, I'd read an article somewhere in one of the popular magazines about the formation of the Caribbean federation. I thought, "There's something that nobody knows anything about, so why don't I go down there and find out." So meanwhile I did write a paper... oh, by the way, I did write a paper in the senior seminar. It was supposed to be about some place that you'd never been and didn't know anything about to start. You couldn't just reel off about some Philippine episode or something. So I did a little research, mostly from Time magazine, and gave a little talk on the Caribbean federation. And by that time I'd gotten kind of interested in it, so when the April Fool card came around, I included that. I also wanted to be chief of the political section in Manila again, but this time on my own. They told me I didn't have enough rank for it.

Q: Because Manila by that time was an enormous embassy.

DONOVAN: Even though I'd done it.

Q: I know, isn't that a joke? Well, things change.

DONOVAN: So then I went off to the Caribbean. The important thing about that, really, is that whereas Jean [Wilkowski] has me down there on that list, “Eileen Donovan, Barbados...”

Q: It was a great deal more than that.

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: Now is this correct to say “U.S. representative to the states oAntigua, Dominica, Grenada, St. Christopher, Nevis...”

DONOVAN: It's all one, St. Christopher-Nevis-Anguilla.

Q: St. Christopher-Nevis-Anguilla with dashes between them, St. Lucia and to the associated state of St. Vincent. Now is that the correct way to list this? Take a look at that. I've copied that from what was said about Sally. I want to get that right, so if you can give that to me. In 1968 it was a consulate, is that correct?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: And you were the principal officer?

DONOVAN: Yes, and in 1962 it was a consulate general and I was the consul general. And it also included all the other islands for which we always had consular responsibilities.

Q: And that would be that list down here?

DONOVAN: Well it would be, at that time in 1960, it was Antigua, Dominica. They were all colonies then. Grenada, St. Christopher-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia and St. Vincent. There

wasn't any associated state then. And it also included Montserrat and the British Virgin Islands.

Q: Oh, I see. Why did it become a consulate general having been consulate.

DONOVAN: I don't know.

Q: What are the ground rules for a thing becoming a consulatgeneral? It's just larger, is that it?

DONOVAN: I guess so. We had responsibility for all those other islands, but during the past years this was passed back and forth between Trinidad and Barbados, and at this time we got all of them to keep. I guess that's why they made it a consulate general. I'm not sure though, just making it up.

Q: That sounds like a reasonable assumption.

DONOVAN: So there I got to know all the leaders of all the islands.

Q: You did the political reporting, did you?

DONOVAN: All of it, yes. The first five years. When I went back as ambassador I had two others. So I got to know them very well indeed. I used to slave over classified documents called “political and economic assessments, annual,” for Barbados and for each of the others.

Q: Each of the others. You really had a multi load.

DONOVAN: Somewhere along the line in one of your little sheets there you have. “Is there anything you didn't like about the Department?” Well, I didn't like the fact that to all intents and purposes for those first five years, nobody paid the slightest attention to anything I said. [Chuckles]

Q: Is that right?

DONOVAN: You see it was all in a transition.

Q: Going from EUR to ARA.

DONOVAN: They had a very fine desk officer there, whose name I can't remember, in EUR, but he would just put those reports into his file drawer. You see they had no AID program for the area.

Q: That's right. Of course.

DONOVAN: The whole tragedy of that whole area of the world was that the West Indies Federation, which was established in 1958 and which also had Jamaica and Trinidad as members, folded in 1962. It folded up for reasons which are at great length, but I won't bore you with them, except part of it was their insularity. They did have a little thing called USOM which was an AID mission to the West Indies Federation but when the Federation folded, they were all in pieces again. I tried to tell the Department during those five years that it was criminal to have taken a fund that was meant to help small business, which was a fund that was subscribed to—it went to the Federation of the West Indies—to turn that money back to the Treasury just because there wasn't any Federation of the West Indies. The islands were still there.

Q: And they still needed the help.

DONOVAN: Even more so. But anyway...

Q: That folded in '62, you said?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: So USAID funds were returned to the Department?

DONOVAN: Yes. That was a special fund. But I figured then that I didn't have much clout, as they like to say now, that nobody was paying attention to me. But I did know them all very well and know what they needed and what their gripes were. I kept them friends with pleasantries, platitudes, and no promises. They would all say, what do we have to do, Miss Donovan, go communist to get U.S. attention? I'd say, “It begins to look that way.”

Q: There's a bitter truth to that, isn't there?

DONOVAN: So anyhow, I came back after five years and I was to be assigned somewhere in the Far East. I don't know where. Then it had gone over to ARA, the whole thing. So I went up and talked to a man who was deputy assistant secretary of State for ARA, and again, I didn't have anything to lose. I was leaving the area. So I talked with him for about an hour and I told him all the mistakes that we had made or things we had done or not done, things we had done or failed to do with this [area]. And how it was a shame because the British—even though we had our head in the sand and would not face it—the British were giving up these places. They were all going to be independent, as well as Barbados within a few years. They were right in our backyard. They were sitting athwart—I love that expression, I used it—athwart the entrance to the Panama Canal, with Cuba at one end and Guyana at the other end which was also getting close to being a communist state. And we were just ignoring them. All they needed was a little encouragement, or some kind of an AID program that they figured out themselves, or something. So this man listened to me and he said, “Well, you know so much about it, instead of going to the Far East, why don't you stay here? Can we make you assistant director of the office of Caribbean Affairs. But you don't have to bother with Haiti and the Dominican Republic,” which was in their mind at that point. “We'll have a commonwealth Caribbean section and that's yours.” So I got that and it included Jamaica and Trinidad and Guyana and what was then British Honduras. That was my place for the next four years.

Q: By this time you were a senior officer.

DONOVAN: I was a 2. Q: You were there for four more years?

DONOVAN: I was there for a total of four years.

Q: A total of four years and you had been five in Barbados. So yoreally were the expert on this, weren't you?

DONOVAN: I was indeed.

Q: For goodness sakes! How many other people have that much savvy?Goodness sakes, so you were four years at that job.

DONOVAN: Yes. Barbados became independent in 1966. A delegation was headed by Chief Justice Warren and I went down with him and others to celebrate this. Then they appointed this political ambassador man [Frederic R. Mann] to be the first ambassador there. That was [President] Johnson.

Q: Had he given money, you think, to the Johnson campaign?

DONOVAN: Oh, yes, he'd given thousands of dollars. He's the one whwanted to go to Luxembourg, remember?

Q: Yes, yes. He wanted Luxembourg because it was equidistant between Paris and London. Good reason for a post. Isn't that something? [Laughter]

DONOVAN: Anyway...

Q: He became the first ambassador.

DONOVAN: So, then Johnson went out and Nixon came in and he had to resign. Then they started looking for someone else. They thought perhaps it would be useful to have someone who purported to know something about the Caribbean.

Q: I would think so, yes. So you finally got your just desserts anwent back as ambassador.

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: Barbados, in Bridgetown. Then the other things we have writteout correctly. “Special representative to the states of” and so on.

DONOVAN: That's when I went back. I know that I was among the Department's choices, but I didn't know about the White House or anything else. Alex Johnson was then undersecretary for political affairs. He told me he didn't think I'd have much chance of being ambassador to Barbados, although the Department supported me among others, because the assistant secretary of State, who was a man named Richardson...

Q: Elliot?

DONOVAN: Elliot. Would have the final choice, and that politicapersons like that usually chose political appointees.

Q: Alex Johnson was telling you this, Alexis Johnson.

DONOVAN: Then came the Federal Women's Award. In the middle thersomewhere.

Q: Is that one person a year?

DONOVAN: No. I think it's finished now, isn't it?

Q: It is finished now, yes.

DONOVAN: No, it was about five persons from all over.

Q: All over the country.

DONOVAN: It has to be something federal. Anyway...

Q: You won that.

DONOVAN: There was a letter from Patricia Kipp that was the chairman of the board to the secretary saying that I had won it. By the way, that was the second time the nomination got in, the second year. The first year it didn't.

Q: Oh, is that so? The second nomination?

DONOVAN: It was only the first nomination that ever went in.

Q: I see, the second nomination, but only one got in.

DONOVAN: The letter said they'd like to have the heads of the various departments to act as escorts to these ladies. They asked if Mr. Rogers [Secretary of State William P. Rogers] would escort me. But something happened, he either didn't care to or he was away on business probably, so he assigned John Steeves, director general of the Foreign Service. But somebody had mentioned this to Elliot Richardson who was assistant secretary of State and he said, “I would like to escort her if Mr. Rogers can't.”

Q: Did he?

DONOVAN: “Because she's a Massachusetts girl.” He was a Massachusetts man in his spare time. He certainly got a shellacking there, last year didn't he?

Q: Did he not?

DONOVAN: Oh brother, Republicans too. Anyway, he escorted me to the dinner, and I gave a speech, and he said he wanted me to come up and tell him more about the Caribbean, which I did. Always like to talk about the Caribbean. This is just by way of saying that when it came time to be named ambassador, I had the support of the political arm of the Department as well as the career arm. Personally, I think it was Elliot Richardson's support in the White House, because that was before the days of the great

October massacre [October 20, 1973. Richardson resigned after Nixon fired Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox, who was investigating the Watergate scandal. [Cox had subpoenaed nine presidential tape recordings. The White House refused to surrender them.]. Oh, here's my grandfather. I kept it in this book when I wanted a flat page. That's my mother's father. That's Elliot Richardson, who also swore me in.

Q: Did he? I want to hear about that.

DONOVAN: Here's my mother. And that was the then ambassador froBarbados to the OAS.

Q: Now, when you were nominated for this, you say you were the Department's candidate, which I'm sure you were, but do you know specifically who in the Department was pushing your candidacy?

DONOVAN: No, I don't know if anyone was pushing it. I supposthere's a board or something.

Q: You think pretty much it's Elliot Richardson that...

DONOVAN: I think that's what swung it.

Q: Of course. He had the clout.

DONOVAN: No matter, the Department said or didn't say. I went out to... I'm probably the only woman ambassador that was nominated by a president that got kicked out of the job.

Q: But there's a picture of you with Nixon. Did he receive you athe White House?

DONOVAN: No, out on the western coast.

Q: How did that happen?

DONOVAN: He was out there that summer.

Q: And you went out to see him?

DONOVAN: Yes, and together with four or five other ambassadorianominees, Toby Belcher, you remember him?

Q: Yes.

DONOVAN: I don't know, the rest of these are political, and me.

Q: Now if you had to go out there, I hope the government paid youway?

DONOVAN: Oh, yes, they did.

Q: Or did you go in Air Force 1 or 2?

DONOVAN: No, no, gee it was so long ago, they paid our way by commercial. That's me giving a speech in Barbados. This is me teaching kids the principles of geometry.

Q: Can you recall the day that you actually were told you were to be the ambassador? Can you recall how that happened? Did you have a phone call, or a letter, or how was it done? Now President Reagan calls up the people and informs them that they are his chosen.

DONOVAN: I was out to lunch somewhere and when I came back there was a press release about several ambassadors, including me. This was the first I'd heard of it.

Q: It must have been a bit of a shock.

DONOVAN: Oh it was. I was very happy. It was like the day I'd passed the Foreign Service orals. So I went into Ted Long's office. He was the boss in Caribbean Affairs at that time.

I think he had thought in his mind it would be nice to be ambassador to Barbados. But I don't know how far...

Q: It must be quite an exciting time.

DONOVAN: So I said, “They named a new ambassador to Barbados.” He said, “Oh, they did? Who is it?” I said, “Me.” His secretary, named Jesse, whom I remember said, “Not you.” I said, “Yes.”Q: Not giving you the deference you deserve.

DONOVAN: That was the beginning of it all. This was the day I gavEddie two million to the Caribbean Development Bank.

Q: Where were those funds from? Was that the EX-IM Bank?

DONOVAN: No, they were from the United States government. They wenthrough the bank.

Q: What fund of the United States, just Treasury? This wasn't undeAID, was it?

DONOVAN: I think it must. By that time, yes. That's me presentinmy credentials to LeBlanc, the prime minister of Dominica.

Q: Most people have one ceremony that is a big day in their life,but you must have had several ceremonies?

DONOVAN: Oh, I did. I had nine.

Q: Nine! Nine ceremonies.

DONOVAN: These were meetings with the ambassadors to Latin America in various places. See, again, I'm the only woman. All the way through.

Q: All the way through. That must have begun to seem the norm to you. You probably would have been very uneasy if there had been a lot of women.

DONOVAN: This was my officer staff when I went down as ambassador. Q: Who are those people?

DONOVAN: I've forgotten his name. This is Peter Lord. This is the head of a temporary USIS thing. This is the administrative officer. My boys. I sent this in to the Journal [The Foreign Service Journal]. They all have beards. I sent some story about, “The ambassador does not wear a beard” or something.

Q: She's the one without the beard. You had been following this so closely for nine years that it obviously had no surprise for you and you didn't have to do any preparation to go there. Tell me about your Senate hearings?

DONOVAN: That was Fulbright. And he was so busy castigating Casey who was up for something that he took the whole morning, most of it, while I sat there, perspiring again. Val McComie, the ambassador from Barbados to the OAS, later on to Washington, was up in the back row too. And Fulbright said, “Ahem, so they want to send you to Barbados, do they?” I said, “Yes, Sir.” He said, “You know, I don't approve at all of independence for these little islands.” I said, “Well, Barbados is already independent and I think, sir, the others will soon follow.” Then he made some other remark and that was it.

This was the governor general of Barbados, Sir Winston Scott, who came to our Fourth of July party _____. That's crossed flags for the cake. They had a custom there that when the birthday person cut the cake they were kissed by the honored guest. So he's kissing me. This is the wife of the prime minister. That's me saying goodbye to Cameron. This is out at the naval facility that I told you was part of our responsibility. That's the prime minister.

Q: What was the name of the man who was in the audience when Fulbright was making his tactless comment?

DONOVAN: Val McComie. There we are again with all the ambassadors to Latin America.

Q: And again there you are the only woman.

DONOVAN: Isn't that a nice picture of the American flag and thBarbados flag out at the naval facility?

Q: Beautiful. I'd like to look through that, if I may?

DONOVAN: Sure. If you have time.

Q: When you became the ambassador, what would you say was your most important problem? They had achieved their independence. Let's speak about Barbados now. What was their biggest problem that you had to concern yourself with? Was it to try to get money? Was it that they needed money to build up the private sector?

DONOVAN: They never asked for any money. It was of all things, civil aviation. The prime minister had a bug in his mind about a national airline. We in the Department didn't want to give him the right to run a national airline into the United States, primarily because there was only one plane and even that was leased from Freddie Laker.

Q: Grenada?

DONOVAN: The strong man from Grenada for many years was a chap named Geary who was a flamboyant crook, who nevertheless appealed to many of the people. He was kicked out of government by the British for the crime of “squandermania.” Isn't that a lovely name?

Q: I love it.

DONOVAN: From 1962 to '67. But otherwise he was the boss man there. They let him go back again and he had a group of strong men called goons who treated very brutally any opposition. He was finally...

[INTERRUPTION]

DONOVAN: He led Grenada to Independence, however.

[INTERRUPTION]

DONOVAN: What did I say so far?

Q: You said that he had strong men called goons who beat up people.

DONOVAN: Goons. It was kind of a shame because Grenada is the most beautiful of all the islands. There's no doubt about it. High hills and beaches and things. I went over to the Independence of Grenada as United States government official representative. Originally it had been a couple of congressmen that had been chosen, but the British came out and said they couldn't guarantee the safety of anybody attending the ceremony.

Q: Good heavens!

DONOVAN: So nobody asked them to guarantee the safety, but this scared off a lot of people. It scared off the congressmen, for one thing, and it scared off the official Barbados delegate, who never went. And it scared off a lot of people. I went with my political officer, named George Moose, who was a very fine black political officer. One of the smartest men I ever knew who's now ambassador in some little small African country. Anyhow, we went. He had the celebrations at the Grenada Hilton, I guess it is, right on the beach. And the head table with its back to the beach and I, being the only woman again, well there were other women somewhere, but I was the official representative of the United States and the ranking woman. So of course I sat on Mr. Geary's right. I felt a little bit like I did that day

down in Hiroshima in the boat. This is going to be another good way to die. If I were any of those people he's been shooting up, and they were good people, I would be right on the shore in the waves going “AAHHRRRRR” [imitates machine gun noise] at the back of the table. So this is probably my last dinner, but so what?

Anyway it didn't happen. He didn't let them go at all up to the hills where the flags were being exchanged because it was too dangerous. It was a wild and hectic time. The lights went out in the hotel and everything happened. So then I went back home to Barbados and that was early in '74.

Q: Did you have any bodyguards with you to protect you?

DONOVAN: They did send an officer from the Venezuelan embassy, a security officer. But he was so far back in the audience that he wouldn't have been any help to me. He couldn't stand behind me or anything. Anyway I didn't need him. Then just after I left, this young man named Bishop... Geary went on a visit to New York, he wanted to talk about the UFOs in the United Nations. He was crazy. So anyway, Bishop overthrew him, and at the beginning Bishop headed up a group called the New Jewel movement, in case you people know what that means. It means Joint Endeavor for Welfare, Education, and Liberation. He seemed to start off all right. He was a hard-core Marxist and he went from bad to worse until his doings were worse than Geary's, plus the fact that he invited the Cubans in to build this giant airfield. They needed an airfield, but they didn't need that one.

Q: That was military?

DONOVAN: Yes. The only other airport they had was high in the mountains where we would land on our trips and go down these corkscrew roads to town. They could have used an airport all right, but anyway... Then he was overthrown. Well, he was shot and the people who shot him were worse than he was. They were completely dominated by Cubans and Russians too. The governor general of Grenada, whom I had known in the past, begged Great Britain to send some armed forces in to help them, but Great Britain

either didn't respond or said we're too far away or something. So then he asked Barbados and some of the other members of this organization of eastern Caribbean countries. You probably know all this story.

Q: But I don't know it firsthand.

DONOVAN: Barbados asked the United States to help. Barbados didn't but it was the woman prime minister of Dominica who was speaking for them. This was all legal under the United Nations and OAS agreements for regional self-defense. Later on it was made to look illegal but it wasn't. It was just as legal [as it could be]. Rather quickly we and the Barbadians and the Jamaicans finally got forces in there and captured these guys who captured him. I think it was a good thing. It's too bad we had to get into it, because you know most of the publicity has been anti, “attacking a little state like Grenada.” We weren't attacking it. We were, in fact, liberating it. It sounds na#ve but it happens to be true. I wouldn't say it if it weren't because I don't usually like anything that Mr. Reagan does, but in this case I do.

Q: But the people who had killed Bishop, had they been his followerup to that time?

DONOVAN: No. Some of them had a couple of years ago, but they'split.

Q: They were all communist?

DONOVAN: One of them was a man that was a general and had come back after a year of training in Cuba. It was anarchy. There wasn't any government there. I just read an article in the Barbados magazine that I have, just yesterday, saying that “democracy has come back to Grenada.” The people are very happy with the government but they're not happy with the economics. Tourism is just beginning to come back again.

Q: I suppose that's what they mostly depend on?

DONOVAN: No, Barbados now, tourism is the number one industry, above sugar. But Grenada, it's always been bananas and cocoa. It's called the spice island. Bananas and cocoa and copra and nutmeg. But the prices of all those things have gone way down on the world market and they have 30 to 40% - this is just yesterday I read - 30 to 40% unemployment.

Q: Wow. Gee whiz.

DONOVAN: So they're not getting along very well economically. But it has all the potentials to be the most prosperous of the islands. It's so beautiful.

Q: Is it the only one who went leftist?

DONOVAN: Yes, the only one who successfully went leftist. Dominichad a little flurry there when they had a madman.

Q: They seem to produce a lot of them down there, don't there? Looat Papa Doc. Baby Doc.

DONOVAN: Yes. They had a flurry in Dominica but that passed over, and they had a few so-called black power riots in Antigua. But they were not - they were just little splinters.

Q: You believe these islands, as you pointed out, are strategically very important for bases and that sort of thing, so it behooves us to pay more attention to them.

DONOVAN: Well, I think it's high time. Now we are supposedly doing so. There's a thing called the president's Caribbean initiative, which is getting American companies to invest with them. That's a slow and uncertain process. They'll invest where they can make the most money and that will be Barbados or those places which have the best infrastructure for their purposes. It won't help Dominica much, poor miserable Dominica. I feel sorry for it. It's the only one which has a rain forest and which has very little sunshine and

black beaches. There are certain islands which have coral beaches, namely Antigua and Barbados and parts of St. Lucia, but a lot of the others are volcanic. They're black beaches. For some reason tourists don't like black beaches. They want a nice clean white beach. The black beaches are just as clean but it isn't as pretty. And... where was I?

Q: We were talking about the future of these islands and what thecan hope for. Do you think tourism is - no you said...

DONOVAN: Tourism is...

Q: For the islands that are attractive.

DONOVAN: Tourism is doing fine in Barbados and will again in Grenadand is doing quite well in St. Lucia.

Q: What is the island where Princess Margaret used to go?

DONOVAN: She goes to a little island called Moustique, which is part of the St. Vincent Grenadines. Grenada has some Grenadines, southern Grenadines, and St. Vincent has some northern Grenadines. Those are little bitty islands, Palm Island and Moustique and those. Barely little spots in the water. St. Vincent now was practically the only source in the world for arrowroot, which was once used in baby food or something. Then it died out. People didn't use it anymore.

Q: It's very good for making gravies and things.

DONOVAN: Now it has something to do with the high tech industries. So it's coming back again there. That's St. Vincent. They all have a little specialty. Dominica, which I was saying I was sorry for, does have a specialty, called lime juice. You know the famous Rose's Lime Juice, that comes straight from Dominica. But until they get some small industries, that's what they need, small industries started and get some help in doing it.

Q: Are they good at any hand work, weaving, baskets?

DONOVAN: They do a lot of that but that's small time stuff.

Q: That's too small, but what about textiles, lace making, sort oupscale luxury items that would bring in a lot of money?

DONOVAN: No.

Q: They don't do that?

DONOVAN: No. They have a batik industry on the island of St. Lucia.

Q: What do you think is the most important quality an ambassador tthese islands should have?

DONOVAN: Sensitivity and understanding. Of course you could sathat about any ambassador, but...

Q: Yes, but it's less important in some places. I mean, know-how, a knowledge of economics, is more important, for example, if you're going to other places. Or a knowledge of munitions is important in others.

DONOVAN: No, they need to have a sensitivity and understanding.

Q: Are the people very sensitive and very proud?

DONOVAN: Yes. They're proud and sensitive.

Q: I would expect they would be.

DONOVAN: And they are proud of their heritage, which is justice, social justice, and democracy, law and order. I mean the Barbados House of Representatives, the House of Assembly, was established in 1639. The third in the New World.

Q: Third in the new world preceded only...

DONOVAN: By the Virginia House of Burgesses, and I think the Jamaicone. It was third.

Q: And that is Barbados?

DONOVAN: Yes. They've always had courts of law. They've always had legislature according to the British parliamentary system. Of course Barbados was never anything but British.

Q: That's right. I see their literacy rate is 99%.

DONOVAN: Well, that's not functional literacy.

Q: Oh, it's not?

DONOVAN: They can sign their names and they can add and subtract. And quite a few of them speak very well and write very well, but not 97%. I've always objected to that. But let it stay. It looks good.

Q: Oh, sure. It seemed extremely high to me. Do these people havan accent? Is it what we would call a British accent?

DONOVAN: No.

Q: It's not that. They're all special?

DONOVAN: It's their own special accent. It's a mixture of British,Scottish, Irish, and African.

Q: It must be charming to listen to. Very musical.

DONOVAN: It is. And they have certain ways of speaking which don't match our grammatical ideas. They have no accusative or objective case. They say, “I like she,” and things like that.

Q: I'm glad that you learned French, because you've used it so often in your career. [Laughter] I presume you learned Italian while you were in Milano?

DONOVAN: I did as best I could. I had no time for any classes or any Foreign Service training or anything else. I had a Berlitz book, and then I went over to the office at 7 o'clock every morning and had a personal instructor. So I got as far as the present, past, and future tenses, but the verbs are very complicated with lots of rabes and rebes in them. So I remember once I was sitting next to an official of Fiat down from Torino who spoke English perfectly well, but he wouldn't. The Italians are a little bit like the French, they won't speak English lest they make a mistake and somebody laughs at them. They are sensitive people too. They all are in their own way, except us.

Q: Except us. We go ahead and blunder in, don't we?

DONOVAN: So I remember we got finished talking about the weather and about his family, and about all the simple things that you'd find in the first... I was doing pretty well in my bastard Italian and then I came to a point where I wanted to say something really substantive. It was a matter of some importance about factory workers. I had just finished seeing the bishop of Milano who was the next Pope, Paul. Ambassador Clare Boothe Luce was holding forth at the embassy in Rome. They were very interested in the factory workers. The fact that they would be kept so content that they wouldn't go communist, which they already were in Bologna. So I wanted to say to this man, from an industrialist

point of view, if we thought thus and so, how would you feel about it? That brings you into the subjunctive and the contrary-to-fact structures which are all different and they're all full of rabes and rebes. So I pondered over this sentence. By the time I thought of the correct way of saying it, the opportunity had slipped by and we were on another subject altogether.

Q: Speaking of Clare Boothe Luce, did you have much contact with her?

DONOVAN: No, not very much. Henry came to Milano more often than she did, to talk to publishers and corporate executives and things. She came for the opening of the Milano trade fair, the U.S. exhibit. The next year I was there, too, for that. I had to go through the whole fair and go to all the Russian exhibits and just see what kind of machinery they were showing. You know, I'm not an expert on machinery either, but you could always tell what it was from the... And I walked for a week in the inside of that fair. I took a solemn oath that I'd never again go to a trade fair or any other kind of a fair as long as I lived. That's been one of the few oaths of abstinence I've been able to keep. [laughter]

Q: But you were giving up smoking.

DONOVAN: It's almost there. You see, I didn't have any more. So anyway, she came to the opening that first year. Then they would have a meeting of all the consulates general and principle officers every now and then and she would appear with her rose. She always had fresh [one] every day. And make a little speech and then the DCM would take over. It was an interesting period. Now that you've got me thinking along these lines, I've thought of a lot more interesting things that happened that I sort of skipped over there.

Q: Just add them.

DONOVAN: I stayed pretty well out of the consular affairs, and I did that in Barbados too. I had enough to do without getting into that. The one time I did, I made a mistake. There in Milano I got a funny letter from a very prominent lady in Athens, Georgia, written in green

ink going uphill. I do that myself now when I use a lap board. So I'm not so harsh on her as I was at the time. I thought my goodness, here's a famous-name lady who is almost an illiterate. But she had been to Italy and she'd bought a beautiful gold frame for one of her paintings from Florence. She ordered it shipped by this company in Milan and when it came it was all smashed. So she had written some letters and gotten no satisfaction from the company, so then she wrote to me. I asked the man if he'd come over or he wanted me to go over to his office and see if we could straighten out this poor lady's difficulties. He told me over the phone that he wouldn't have anything to do with a woman in the United States who called him a snake. I said, “She called you a snake? It's incredible. Do you have that letter?” He said, “Oh yes, I have it right here on my desk.” I said, “Why don't you come over in the morning and show me that letter and that might help to solve the impasse.” So he came over and she'd said, “I know you are a reptilian company.” She had meant to say “reputable.” [laughter]

Q: So she had called him a snake, hadn't she?

DONOVAN: I said, “Can't you let her get the frame fixed in Georgia, if it's fixable? She said it was all in pieces, beautiful frame from Florence. That was the sort of thing. All and all, big-time convertibility of currency and stuff. So I was rather glad to go to Harvard from there.

Q: Did you ever have any desire to go back to Europe?

DONOVAN: I would have if I'd stayed long enough. I had a very bad fall in Barbados about a year before I left. I had a black basalt floor to the bathroom which ran over no threshold into my bedroom. I was happily showering and I got up and took a slide in this and landed in my bedroom on the back of my head with my head against a file cabinet. I've always been messing up my bedrooms with file cabinets. I think I must have been out for a little while, but I just remember it was a Friday night, getting up and getting into bed. I had already put the hook on my door, the chain, before I even took the shower, although it

wasn't necessary to do that, but I always did it anyway because the place was so totally insecure.

Q: Was it?

DONOVAN: Had no protection whatsoever. And I could not move. I could not move a muscle. I managed to get my arm over to the telephone and call a friend and asked that friend to call Martin, my butler, to get an ax and knock down the door, open the door, then call a doctor. So I had a local doctor instead of going down to the hospital downtown, because this place where I lived was miles away from town, a half an hour's drive. He said it would be all right. It was obviously a muscular thing. He gave me a muscle relaxant and said to stay in bed a few days and come and have an X-ray at the local convent hospital. Which I did. I was in terrible pain. There was a little Trinidadian nurse there, the type that takes the X-rays but doesn't read them. That's a rule, I guess, everywhere. With great effort I got up and down and she took X-rays and then when she was finished I said, “Look, I know you're not supposed to say anything.” She said, “No, you have to wait and see the doctor.” I said, “Is there anything wrong with me?” She said, “I think you might have a little trouble but he'll be the one to tell you.” So when he read them—it was a white British doctor—he still said it was just muscular. Well, it turned out to be several broken vertebrae.

Q: Good heavens, upper or lower back?

DONOVAN: They were upper. Some since, lower.

Q: How dreadful.

DONOVAN: I was bent way over. So I was having a party in spite of that, a gathering. Somebody brought a famous doctor from the Cornell University surgical center hospital. He said, “Listen, get out of here, get on a plane and come up to my hospital and we'll give you a thorough going over.” So I did that. He said, “I don't see how you can do that job any

more.” See, I was running around to all the other islands in these little airplanes. He said, “It will take a long time for this to heal and they may never heal. And meanwhile you've got a lot of beginning compression fractures down below.” So I stood it as long as I could and then I thought “It's time I leave.” While the going is good to get out, so I retired in the middle of 1974. Since then it's been better and worse. But I think I could have done it if I didn't use little airplanes. Of course, the new man down there that came there one and half ambassadors ago and had a lot of clout, being a political, he got himself a military attach# for the other islands, and a leased plane which could be used by the consular officers as well as himself to go around the islands in style and comfort.

So, looking back on all the things that I failed to do, one of them was get myself enough clout. When there was a serious about-to-be-happening in Grenada, I sent the first and only flash telegram that I ever sent to Henry Kissinger, to try and get some attention above ARA, which was paying no attention again. I got a reply back from the nice little fellow that was then the director general of the Foreign Service, saying “The secretary is out of the country, but he has asked me to reply to your wire, and as soon as he has come back we'll consider this. In the meanwhile I'll turn it over to ARA.” If I'd had more clout I would have sent it first to the president, not to Henry Kissinger, and then I would have got some action.

Q: That's right. Was this when Bishop was acting up, or what wagoing on?

DONOVAN: To be perfectly honest, I don't remember. I just don'remember, but I know it was a crisis.

Q: Was all of your time spent, as an ambassador, under Nixon or diyou serve under more than one administration?

DONOVAN: No, it was all under Nixon. When I came back in 1974 iAugust...

Q: You must have come back about the time of Watergate?

DONOVAN: I did. Watergate had started and I remember having dinner with Jean Wilkowski and Evelyn Fogarty on the night of August 8th, 1974, when Nixon finally gave up the ghost and [resigned]. Actually this ambassadorial thing was started, the machinery was started, under Johnson but it never got anywhere until long after he'd gone. It seems funny. Somebody said to me the other day, “You're the only ambassador that I know that ever served under a president who got kicked out.”

Q: Looking back over your career, can you think, other than that you wish you'd had more clout, can you think of anything you wish you had done differently?

DONOVAN: It all adds up to that. When I was writing those political and economic assessments, those first five years, and nothing was happening...

[INTERRUPTION]

I should have picked up my boots and handbag and gone to Washingtoand started knocking on doors, which I didn't do.

[INTERRUPTION]

DONOVAN: I probably said them in the middle somewhere.

Q: Oh, I'm sure you did. I was wondering how do you feel about a panel to review ambassadorial appointments, the way they do federal judges? Do you think that's a good idea? Not so much for the career people, because they have to be pretty good to get to that point.

DONOVAN: Kind of like that panel they established once before

Q: Under Carter?

DONOVAN: Yes, to choose the ambassadors. That was supposed to bmostly political, too, but they got into the...

Q: It didn't work.

DONOVAN: It didn't work at all. Barbara White was on that. Thawas just a front. It didn't work. A panel to consider ambassadors?

Q: Yes.

DONOVAN: Well, it depends on what good they could do.

Q: That's it. Is it practical?

DONOVAN: The way they do it now is not too good. I mean it's thbureaus that nominate people for their area, isn't it?

Q: Yes.

DONOVAN: And then, well, like Alex Johnson just happened to be undersecretary for political affairs and whoever is the political undersecretary or assistant secretary really has veto power and then he's the one who presents the name to the White House. I don't suppose this is going to change much.

Q: No, I don't suppose it is. There isn't anything you can test,the way you can with a lawyer.

DONOVAN: No. It's the people in the bureaus who should, they don't always, know who the best people are. Of course, there are a lot of people that are aggressive and self-serving salesmen, ambitious, who are not half as good as some more conservative, quiet fellow who doesn't do that. But I don't know. Of course personally, just between you and me, I think that the importance of ambassadors has gone out of style. It's gone out of

history. Every time you have anything important now they send around some creep from the Department.

Q: That's right. Well don't you think communications, the facilitof communicating, has done away with a lot of need for...

DONOVAN: I think so. I think so.

Q: When you can pick up a telephone or hop a Concorde and get therin a short time.

DONOVAN: I don't think they're as important as they used to be.

Q: And yet, you know, people very much want the job, people who arnow diplomats very much covet the title.

DONOVAN: Oh, yes.

Q: And this is why they want these jobs and this is why they ask for them as their payoff, so to speak. What proportion do you think is a workable one? It's up to 60% political now [the Reagan administration].

DONOVAN: Well, for a while there, I guess it was during the Kennedy era and for a long time before that, it was very close to 70 career and 30 political.

Q: That's right. That's what Carter tried to keep.

DONOVAN: That would be fairer division. Of course they still send the politicals to London, Paris, Rome, Bonn, Madrid, and they send the others to Botswana and...

Q: But now they want to go to Botswana.

DONOVAN: Do they?

Q: Isn't that odd? They want the title.

DONOVAN: Very odd.

Q: Any advice to young women coming into the Service?

DONOVAN: None, except to say that it's probably easier now than it was and you can marry up with a Foreign Service officer and still get sent to the same post, if you're lucky, and it seems to be there are a lot of them who do, and have two careers together.

Q: Do you think it's as interesting now as it was in your day?

DONOVAN: I don't know how it is now. But it was interesting in my day. One other difficulty that I found but I overcame it as best as I could, was being one instead of two. It didn't matter whether it was a man or a woman, you still had to be talking about civil aviation and having the whole delegation come to dinner with you at your house and saying, “Oh, my gosh, has anyone thought about the flowers? Then, too, I had no dependable housekeeper.

Q: You didn't? Not even as ambassador?

DONOVAN: No.

Q: That must have been awful, because I'm sure you must haventertained a great deal.

DONOVAN: I did, but I had a cook and a housemaid and a butler. But the cook wouldn't do any shopping or any meal planning, so that meant that I had to do that. She would get things like flour and sugar and eggs from the local place. But if there was a dinner party, somebody had to plan the menu. Someone had to make sure that it was there. And this was not one of the things that I was best at.

Q: Don't sell yourself short. It's a strain.

DONOVAN: I found this being two jobs was rather difficult.

Q: Did you find one particular kind of entertaining worked better?

DONOVAN: Oh, yes. In this house I lived in as ambassador... It was a rented house, way out in St. Peter, 30 minutes, way too far away from the embassy, but it was a beautiful place. It was falling to pieces but it was beautiful. Owned by Drew Hanks, the mother of [a] senator. I didn't know whether she was dead or alive until I saw her name on the list for President Reagan's dinner party. She collected houses the way that some women collect diamonds. She had eleven houses in exotic parts of the world and this was one of them. So it was rented out to us. It had a little beach house. It had a little French pavilion where my mother and I lived. It had what they call the “above house,” which was a plantation house falling apart. The termites were flying over the stairs. But it had a little beach house down on the sea wall, not right in front, but just next to it, a lovely little swimming beach. So I used to have a brunch every Sunday morning.

Q: How nice.

DONOVAN: With eight or ten people, not any more. If you hadifferent people you could have the same menu.

Q: Exactly.

DONOVAN: So I had this cook who had one specialty which was... Odear, what do you call that thing that sinks down if you carry it?

Q: Souffl#.

DONOVAN: A souffl#. A cheese souffl#. So I would have some kind of fruit and then ham and cheese souffl# with sliced ham and dessert. Rum punches or whatever they wanted before that. That was an easy way. Now I would have small dinner parties in this “above

house” when I had to be inside, because occasionally it would rain in the fall. I would have a table of ten and then two small round tables of six. That would be about as much as I could handle. And I would have a big celebration on the Fourth of July with fireworks, which I got reprimanded for because I forgot to ask for permission the first year. Then I would have a reception at noontime, a diplomatic reception. And then every other year I would have...

Q: And the Fourth of July then was for your staff on the beach?

DONOVAN: No, no it was for all kinds of Barbadians, but not necessarily diplomats. I mean, they were there too with their wives. Then I instituted something which got me a commendation from the famous former mayor of Bridgetown. I found out there were a lot of American citizens there who were black, who were what I call the “high button shoe” types that had been Pullman porters for fifty years until they retired and their wives wore big white hats and white gloves. They were not on anybody's so-called list for invitations because no one knew they were there. They would be too shy and too poor to drive out. So I used to have a party for them in the office which they could all reach by bus or whatnot. I would invite the mayor whom they all loved at that time. It's all in the past now. Motley, who had this big chain like the lord mayor of London. They would come by 11:30 and the party was from 11:30 to 1, I guess. They'd sit down on the hard benches and stay. There was never any coming and going. Then I also had a great big party on Washington's birthday, when it became necessary, against my personal desires, to entertain a lot of visiting American VIP's who expected the ambassador to do something for them, which I wouldn't do if they didn't need it. But I would invite them to this big George Washington birthday party. I'd have it catered, mostly. Took a lot of my own money because the representational allowance was $900 a year for the whole post.

Q: Imagine.

DONOVAN: Later it increased gradually. Of course now they have a big AID mission there, a regional AID mission and regional USIS and military attach#s and Marine guards. We never had any of that.

Q: How about Peace Corps?

DONOVAN: Oh yes, we had Peace Corps. That was another place where I sort of was running around with Mr. Barrow, slightly. It was fixed up, though. I read John F. Kennedy's announcement about the Peace Corps in the New York Times. We had no communications other than a one-time pad [simple cryptographic system]. That was all, and the rest would come in by sea mail, I guess. Sometimes it came in a pouch and the Navy would pick it up for us. So I decided this was a great idea and to go right ahead with it. So I went to the other islands and told them about the Peace Corps, and remarkably they were not too interested at first, except St. Lucia. We had the first group at St. Lucia. Then Barrow went to Washington and decided he wanted Peace Corps. He'd never mentioned it before. He went into the Peace Corps headquarters and they promised to send him a Peace Corps contingent to Barbados. Well, he never mentioned it to me and of all the places that didn't need Peace Corps it was Barbados, compared to those struggling little poverty-stricken islands who really did need them. He announced when he got off the plane that Washington was going to send him Peace Corps. Then the other islands got a little bit interested. They thought if Barrow wants them they must- (end of tape)

DONOVAN: Ended up with 400 Peace Corps volunteers.

Q: Four hundred?

DONOVAN: Yes. All the islands.

Q: Good heavens.

DONOVAN: And a Peace Corps director, a controversial lady. At that time some of the Peace Corps volunteers were dodging the Vietnam war, others were not. We had all varieties.

Q: And you had a woman director?

DONOVAN: For much of the time. A black lady. Anyway, she was very active. She was a little bit too active. She'd go over promising the heads of the islands all sorts of things. That worked out all right.

Q: Was is mainly in public health and education that they werworking?

DONOVAN: No, agriculture.

Q: Obviously they spoke English, so they weren't teaching English.

DONOVAN: Sometimes they didn't speak too good English, I don't think. St. Lucia and St. Vincent they spoke a French patois a great deal, not the educated government people. Barbados was the only island that had always been controlled by the British. The others went from hand to hand. Every peace treaty they switched over from France to England. They formed a different kind of government for them each time. So we had Peace Corps. We had the naval facility out there too. We didn't have very many people to run all this.

I have one photo in an era which goes from 1960 to '65—I never had any time to paste pictures, but I think they're all in an envelope—and there's one that shows my staff in 1962. Total including clerks. Now they have 117 people at the embassy.

Q: No, really?

DONOVAN: And they have another embassy in Grenada and another one iAntigua.

Q: What do they all find to do?

DONOVAN: A lot of them are consular managing now. I have skipped over that almost completely. But everybody in those islands wanted to come to the United States and we couldn't take them all. We could take very few and all those that wanted to come... as I say, the only time I ever interfered in a consular officer's job was when there was a young American man that ran a restaurant, and he had a chief head waiter whom I got to know very well, and he wanted to go to New York for the summer. Frank sent a letter saying he was indispensable and he would come back and all this and that. But at separate times my two young consular officers said, “No he won't come back.” So they refused him a visa. That time I wasn't supposed to but—I mean, it's their responsibility—but I kind of overruled them by persuasion. I said, “I'm sure he will. Let him go, we can't keep on refusing everyone in the island of Barbados and all the other islands.” They'd come struggling down. They had no place then on these islands to go except Barbados consulate. So about two months later they both came in to me together, Dick and Bill, and they had 'The Advocate,' the newspaper of the island, opened up, and they said, “Look” and there was a picture of this big wedding of that fellow getting married to an American citizen in New York. They were right. They were right.

Q: What do you think about the proliferation of the post? Do yothink it's just gotten out of hand?

DONOVAN: No, it's probably necessary. I don't imagine half of it is, but the other half is. You see it's all regional. There's a personnel officer at the embassy who's a regional personnel officer and he goes down as far as Guyana and Trinidad. This was my entire staff in 1962.

Q: Imagine. Your entire staff.

DONOVAN: Joanne and Dick they were consular officers. Millie Funk. I needed someone to type—I still couldn't type—and I asked for an administrative officer. They said, The post is too small for an administrative officer. We'll send you a position, which they abolished

later, called 'administrative specialist'." They were administrative officers for small posts. So Millie came down to do that. So then she could do all the classified typing and also the one-time pad. Imagine that, that was in 1962. But Lois Kay was a local employee. These are all local employees in the consular section. There were two consular officers with a lot of territory to cover.

Q: I should say. That's fascinating. What was the best part obeing an ambassador? What part about it did you enjoy the most?

DONOVAN: The work.

Q: The work?

DONOVAN: It was a great challenge.

Q: Meeting the important people?

DONOVAN: It may sound awfully small time to you...

Q: Not at all, not at all.

DONOVAN: It seems small time. This is a Bradshaw of St. Kitt's [British tourist book]. So Grantley Adams, who was head of the West Indies Federation that folded... these island leaders at that point were getting very much concerned that the missiles from Cape Canaveral would land on their islands. They didn't understand the basic principle of a ballistic trajectory which says that a thing - I had to learn it myself - which says that a thing won't go down until it's due to fall down. So I took them all up [to Florida]. This is the beginning of the trip on an Air Force plane to Cape Canaveral where we stayed for a week and watched the first Minuteman missile come up from the silo. It fell down again but that didn't matter. We climbed up the gantries and had a wonderful time.

Q: When was this?

DONOVAN: It must have been 1960 or '61. It was '61, because SiGrantley Adams was out of the picture. So that's kind of interesting.

Q: That's very interesting.

DONOVAN: That was Barrow when he first got elected in 1961, carrying his box, his dispatch boxes. That's me laying a wreath in November. That's me giving a speech in St. Lucia.

Q: Did you find things were much different - oh, isn't that nice - were much different when you went back as an ambassador than they had been when you were consul general? Did people change at all when you changed your title and had more power?

DONOVAN: No, they didn't.

Q: How about the political people?

DONOVAN: No, because when I went back it was the same party that wain power.

Q: I see. What part of your job did you like least?

DONOVAN: Planning the meals. [Laughter) Isn't that silly?

Q: No, I should think that's quite a chore to have to do it all.

DONOVAN: That's it. You have to do both. St. Lucia had a military establishment that was there during the war, a hospital. A place for people to be put in temporarily coming home from Europe. They gave that back to the St. Lucians and there was a big ceremony in which I gave them all the hospital beds and the hospital building and stuff like that. That was in St. Lucia, the only place you'd see any catholic priests.

Q: Is the religion Church of England, pretty much?

DONOVAN: Yes, it is on Barbados and Antigua. On the other islandthere's more left-over French influence.

Here I am reviewing the troops in St. Lucia. How do you like thanow?

Q: I think that's pretty smashing. Did you find it hard to comback and not be an ambassador any more?

DONOVAN: I found it dreadfully boring.

Q: Boring.

DONOVAN: Boring. At first I didn't because I was so relieved. was so tired.

Q: You had that terrible back.

DONOVAN: Yes. Then I've done quite a little bit of work with the League of Women Voters. Remember when they had the big hassle over the Panama Canal?

Q: Oh, yes, indeed.

DONOVAN: Well, I did a lot of speechifying at that time, trying to put that in perspective, hoping I was right. And things like that.

Q: Were you active at all in the women's movement?

DONOVAN: No.

Q: NOW or any of the others?

DONOVAN: No.

Q: Or back in the Department, you didn't either?

DONOVAN: Oh, no.

Q: No interest?

DONOVAN: I had other things to do.

Q: You had other things more interesting to do. And you obviouslnever felt yourself that you had been at all discriminated against.

DONOVAN: No. I wasn't like that Alison Palmer. She was the onthat...

Q: She still is, you know.

DONOVAN: She's a bishop now or something.

Q: She just lost the case. It's a class action suit and they lost and she's suing again. Putting it all through again. She seems to be making a career out of the class action.

DONOVAN: I thought she was the one you meant when you spoke osomeone that just had a rotten personality.

Q: Oh.

DONOVAN: That was someone else?

Q: That was someone else, yes. So you retired when you came back from here. One thing, you had the responsibility for your mother, now that must have been an added burden too, wasn't it? I gather she was getting up in years.

DONOVAN: Yes, she was 94 when she died last February. But she was better when I was in Barbados, especially the first time. She came to me in 1960. That's when my father died. We had a nice arrangement. I said, “You can leave any moment you want to leave. If I want you to leave, I'll tell you. Meanwhile just relax and enjoy it.” So she did. I lived in

a house that was... It's the DCM's house now. She paints. She painted. She painted only seascapes and trees, flowering trees. She didn't paint that one, but she painted similar ones. She would get on the rattly old bus and go downtown to the dirty old market. And she'd do shopping for me.

Q: That was a help.

DONOVAN: That first few years. She enjoyed swimming too. It wasn't until I went back the second time that she was pretty crippled up with arthritis.

Q: She wasn't able to help.

DONOVAN: She used to use a cane and then it was a walker, and after she was here it was a wheel chair. But it was easy overseas because you always had so many people to help you, you know.

Q: So in a way it was easier, but still it was a burden and your problem. You had to worry about her, of course.

DONOVAN: It wasn't a burden, though. I didn't consider it as burden.

Q: No, I shouldn't have used that word, but a worry, maybe.

DONOVAN: I called her my little partner. She was a very remarkablwoman.

Q: She sounds it.

DONOVAN: Very remarkable. They used to call me, the people around the house, they used to call the woman who ran the plantation, as the mistress, and they would call me mistress. So they began to call me the young mistress and her the old mistress.

Q: There is an entry here in your curriculum vitae which I don't understand. It has “FA-NC 4/74.” What does that mean? [Probably “Foreign Affairs, Non-career.”] This was in the State Department book for 1974. Do you know what that stands for?

DONOVAN: I haven't the slightest idea.

Q: I haven't any idea either.

DONOVAN: Oh, I don't know what it means. There are a few months there where I stayed on as a foreign service reserve officer, even though I was officially retired, from the end of March to July or August. It didn't matter, I guess, but it was just to...

Q: Perhaps that's what it refers to. You retired because of youhealth, I gather?

DONOVAN: Yes, I retired because I didn't think I could hack it any longer successfully and that I wasn't doing the job justice if I didn't run around.

Q: Were you much involved with this CARICOM, the treaty of thCaribbean?

DONOVAN: I reported on it and I went to all the meetings that they had. It had nothing to do with us giving them money or doing anything like that. What we did give money to was the Caribbean Development Bank. That's where you saw me giving all that money.

Q: Yes. Was there much work done in family planning while you werthere?

DONOVAN: There was a family planning association that was headed up by a very prominent lawyer named Jack Deere. They did quite a bit, I don't know. I didn't get into it.

Q: I thought that would be something quite outside your normal duties. As far as the prime minister and his wife went, I gather you were very close to them?

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: From knowing them all that time.

DONOVAN: Yes.

Q: What was his position before Independence?

DONOVAN: He was a member of the House of Assembly, the legislature.

Q: His party leader, sort of thing? DONOVAN: Yes. He was a lawyer basically.

Q: I know you were very successful there and I appreciate yougiving me your story, very much.

DONOVAN: There's a lot left out but there's a lot more than you cainclude.

Q: You never know. We could maybe write a whole series of volumes.[Laughter]

End of interview